



THE SURGEON

Ivor Back

1926

SIR WILLIAM ORPEN

ARTIST & MAN

By P. G. Konody
& Sidney Dark

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PART I
THE MAN

By
Sidney Dark



A LETTER TO ALBERT RUTHERSTON

Childhood & Early Life

||VOR BACK, GERALD KELLY AND I LUNCED TOGETHER on the day of Orpen's funeral. We were sad, as men are who have lost a friend. We were sad that so brilliant a life should have come to so early an end, and we were sore that the newspaper obituaries had almost entirely failed to suggest the man whom we had known so well. As we gossiped, we discovered that we were in agreement as to his essential qualities. Back's and Kelly's Orpen had been my Orpen. That is not, of course, to say that either Kelly or Back will accept my impression as accurate in detail. It seemed to us that both his remarkable achievements as a painter and his fascinating and very elusive character more than justified the attempt to describe the man in his manner as he lived.

Afterwards, I discussed the matter with my friend P. G. Konody and this book is now published with the gracious assistance of Lady Orpen and her brother-in-law. So far as I am concerned, my only qualifications for attempting this sketch of a man whom I loved, are my affection for him and an intimate friendship during the last fourteen years of his life. I am indebted for invaluable suggestions to Lord Riddell, Robin Legge, W. Nicholson, Adrian Stokes, T. T. Aikman and many others. I have not attempted any sort of detailed biography. That would be redundant in view of Konody's considered study of his work as a painter. What I have written is, in its intention, a tribute and a character sketch.

William Orpen was born on the 27th November, 1878. He was the fourth son of Arthur Herbert Orpen, a Dublin solicitor. His mother was the eldest daughter of Charles Caulfield, Bishop of Nassau. The Orpens claim descent from one Robert Orpen, son of Sir Richard de Erpingham

Dublin in the 'Eighties

Orpen of Norfolk, who fled to Ireland after the battle of Naseby and settled in county Kerry in 1661. Richard's son Robert fought in the battle of the Boyne. It is a queer fact that both Orpen and Augustus John, his famous contemporary, and fellow-student at the Slade, should both have been the sons of solicitors. Orpen was the child of his parents' middle age, and to an extent his genius was inherited. His father was an excellent amateur painter and his mother had considerable talent with her brush. His eldest brother had eager artistic ambition and became a successful architect and a painter of distinction. His mother was determined that one of her sons should be a great artist. William was her last chance, and maternal ambition was justified by the boy's artistic precocity. There is a family legend that, even when his baby fingers were too soft to hold a pencil, he would try to draw pictures with it held in his mouth.

Orpen had a very happy childhood. "Life was all joy," he wrote, "as any young child's life should be, and one should surely never forget to be thankful for a happy childhood with not a blot of sorrow to it."

Bernard Shaw has described middle-class Protestant Dublin twenty years before Orpen was born. In his *Life of Oscar Wilde*, Frank Harris has suggested the grim influences of heredity and early environment in Dublin that played their part in contriving Wilde's damnation. There was nothing of either Bernard Shaw's Dublin or of Wilde's Dublin in the Dublin of Orpen's childhood. I very much doubt whether the professional Dublin Protestant generally possesses qualities that are characteristically Irish and un-English, though the Orangeman of the north is at least as un-English as the Catholic of the south. Anyhow, so far as I understand Irish characteristics, I should certainly affirm that Orpen possessed none of them.

His eldest brother has been good enough to recall Orpen's childhood days.

"My thoughts," he writes, "seem to associate him largely with our garden at Oriel, a beloved spot, held very dear in memory, filled with the hot scent of summer flowers and the drone of bees. Bill loved, as I did when very small, to hang over the low half water butt and see the white and blue sky reflected, and loved the smell of the

PLATE I

1911

THE ARTIST'S FATHER & MOTHER



"Coming among us as the youngest, I do not think he was spoiled, though, perhaps, he was allowed to stay up too late at night, which, we were told, would check his physical growth. Doubtless it did. He was a very active, well-developed boy, and was always desperately keen.

"While he was in his early teens he became a sound lawn-tennis player and won several prizes at local tournaments. On one occasion he beat an exceptionally tall competitor after some gruelling sets. His opponent complained: 'I don't mind being beaten, but, Lord, when they bring on my opponent in a perambulator, it is too much.'"

Hugh A. Studdert Kennedy recalls in the *Dearborn Independent* Orpen's tennis playing after he had become a student at the Dublin Art School. He writes:

"The Billy of those days *was* little; a small boy, rising fifteen or so, with a tousled fair head, an imp-like boy, for ever doing quaint things; an artist, even then, going into Dublin every morning on the 8.45 or the 9.16 to art school, and coming out again, each afternoon, with the pockets of his own or somebody else's coat—for Billy had a fine disregard in such matters—bulging with sketches. All day, Billy would draw and sketch and paint, doing wonderful things past our comprehension, but every evening, in the summer-time, Billy played tennis.

"We all played tennis in those days. And how we played! The deep, dark seriousness of it all! Sir William Orpen will surely remember the full dress debates held by the gang 'down at the club,' when the twilight of the summer evening had given way to the dusk of the summer night; when the dew lay heavy on lawn and leaf, and the corncrake in a neighbouring meadow was the only sound above the stillness. In all these conferences, and at all times where tennis was concerned, Billy was 'our hope.' He was something more than the infant prodigy of the gang. Not only could he give points to, and lick us all, but, like a little bantam cock, he would take on anybody of any size, and put up a wonderful fight.

"And so it came about at one of these conferences that the great plot was hatched which resulted in the incident

“The Trousers”

of ‘the trousers’ . . . Billy, we had decided, should enter for the club tournament. Now, let there be no mistake about it, it was a great affair. Players from far and near came to compete. Several of us decided to enter, knowing full well that we would not get beyond the first round, but with Billy it was different. Billy was the dark horse. Billy, dancing round like an inspired imp on the back line, or glowering at his opponent with his chin just over the net, might do anything. And so Billy entered. The weather was perfect on the opening day, as it was on all the days that followed, and Billy was the hero of every day. The rest of the gang was scattered in the opening hours, but Billy, Billy won his way through to the finals.

“Now the final day of this particular tournament was a great day; it was a full-dress day; all the country-side would be there in full dress. And so the night before, the gang held a meeting. Billy must make a great and creditable showing. Billy, above all things, must be dressed for the occasion. He must wear ‘whites’; whites in the finals were *de rigueur*. Billy protested. He did not have a pair of whites, or, if he had, he did not know where they were. We insisted; Billy protested, but finally declared that he would get a pair somewhere. And so we left it.

“Well, Billy was as good as his word. But he forgot about them until the last moment, and, then, as ill luck would have it, the only man who had a pair of whites to lend him was a giant. But what did that matter to Billy? With the waist well up about his armpits, with several reefs in the trouser legs, he appeared on the court at the appointed time. The gallery roared, and the gang and gallery were cheering together. For never before had Billy been in such form. He went from strength to strength; he was everywhere at once; his hair became even more tousled; his face was smeared with dust and whiting; the trousers sagged and shifted, but Billy played on and on, and—won.”

Orpen continued to play tennis until two or three years before his death, and he was considerably proud of his prowess. In *Who's Who* he described his recreations as “Fitzwilliam IIIb,” and for years there was considerable discussion concerning the meaning of this cryptic entry.

Dublin in the 'Eighties

When he left Ireland he was a member of the Fitzwilliam Lawn Tennis Club. Four years after he had settled in London, he visited the old club during one of his visits to his parents, and he was asked by the Committee to play for them against another club. He turned up on the match day to find that he did not know any of his fellow players. He asked what team it was, and he was told IIIb, the sixth or lowest team in the club. "This roused me to such anger that I put it into *Who's Who*," he afterwards explained, "and although that is twenty years ago, I have never changed it."

Orpen has described the literary influences of his boyhood, which were certainly far more English than Irish, and included the weekly reading of *Ally Sloper's Half-Holiday*, the delightful publication that added joy to the schooldays of many of us. But this Protestant family, in its pleasant home outside Dublin, could not be altogether indifferent to political happenings or be quite unaffected by the national spirit, renewed by the political genius of Parnell. The Orpen boys sang English music-hall songs, but they also sang :

Then take the Shamrock from my hat
And fling it on the sod ;
But never fear, it will take root there,
Though under foot it's trod.

Their relations with their Roman Catholic neighbours were of the friendliest. Orpen has related :

"Near the home of my childhood there was, and still is, a convalescent home run by Sisters of Mercy. I remember well one day that a Sister came over and told my mother that a Cardinal was going to visit them. Would my mother lend them any silver teapots and such-like things she had for the occasion—they wished to make a 'show,' and this, of course, my mother did."

Ireland of the early 'eighties was the Ireland of the Phoenix Park murders, but that did not apparently in the least disturb the serenity of the Orpen household. Political assassinations remain more or less a commonplace of Irish politics and, even in England, events that appear to posterity horrible and portentous, hardly make a ripple on the calm waters of average contemporary life. Orpen remembered Piggott, the notorious forger of the Parnell Commission, as "a nice, quiet, kind old gentleman, with

Some Politicians

a white beard," who used to swim every morning in Kingstown Harbour.

Never in his life was Orpen a politician. I imagine that, until he was in daily contact with the delegates at the Paris Peace Conference, he had hardly given a thought to public affairs. But he always had a deep affection for his country and an admiration for the Irish leaders of his youth. He recalled William O'Brien as "that courtly, gentle scholar from the south, so calm, so reserved, so considerate of others." Michael Davitt was "a God-fearing lover of nature." Of Tim Healy he wrote, "the bubbles of humour rise out of him like those that rise out of the finest whiskey and Schweppes,"—a description that Mr. Healy himself must have vastly appreciated. In later years, he became very friendly with Jim Larkin, the revolutionary Dublin labour leader, for whom he had the highest regard. He said that he was "a very Godly, honest, straightforward man," and in a letter to William Rothenstein he wrote, "Larkin is the greatest man I ever met." This is a very remarkable estimate.

When he was thirteen, Orpen became a student in the Dublin School of Art. Few modern men can have begun their art education at so early an age, and for Orpen it must have meant a very sketchy general education. He never, indeed, read very much, and his admirable style as a writer is one of the most amazing incidents of his career. He says that when he entered the Dublin School, "I at once became an old man, one of the world's workers, anyway, I looked on myself as such and dreamt very very few dreams—I was too eaten up with my own importance."

It is difficult to determine how accurate are any man's impressions of what he was as a boy. The experiences of adolescence are generally wrongly interpreted in retrospect through the loss of illusion that comes to most of us with maturity. But Orpen was certainly one of the world's workers, and it may be one of the key facts of his life that at no time did he dream many dreams.

"Bill," his brother says, "worked very hard at the Dublin School under James Brenan, R.H.A., the headmaster. Here is a story told me long ago by my father. Norris Goddard, a well-known Dublin solicitor, meeting

The Dublin School of Art

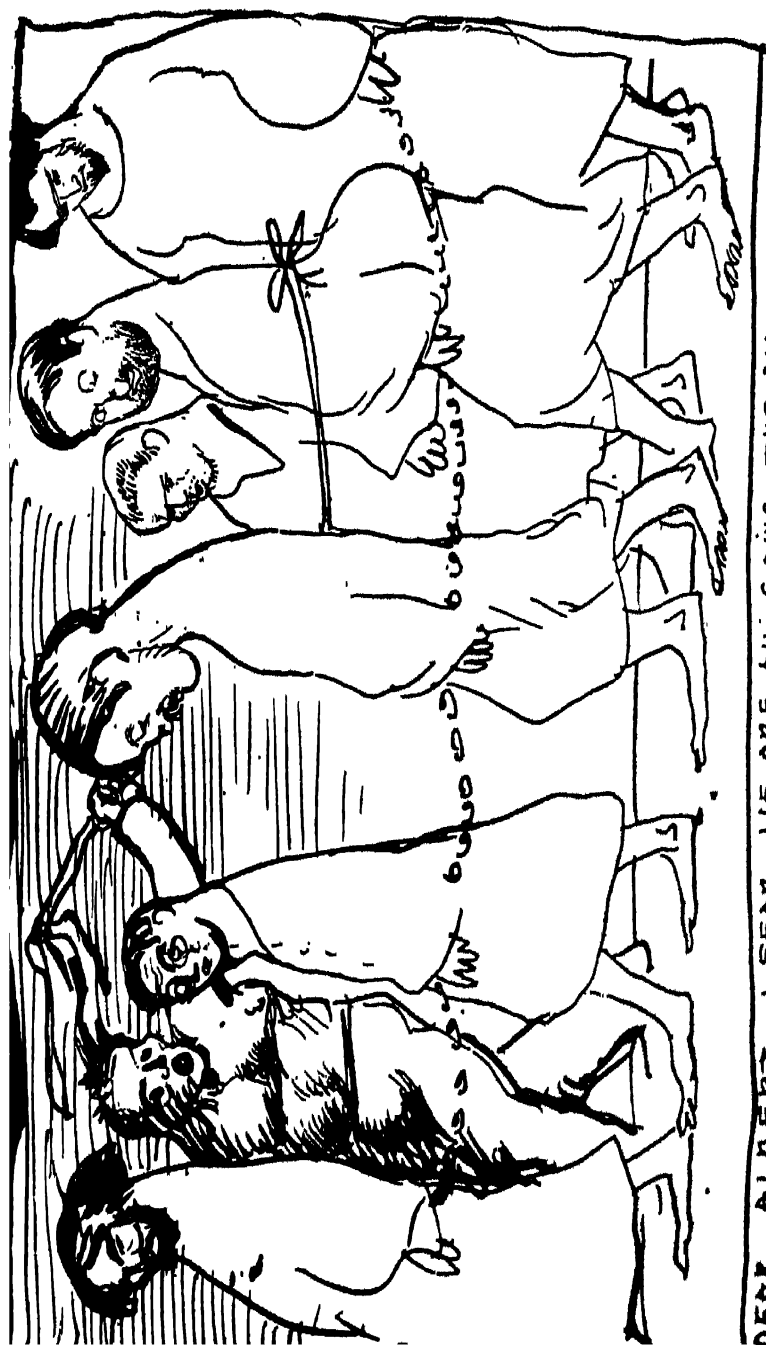
father in the train said : ' I was one day, Orpen, crossing from Molesworth Street to Merrion Square, through the Royal Dublin Society's Buildings, and passing the Museum, near the School of Art, I met James Brenan, who said, " Come into the Museum, Goddard, and I'll show you an interesting exhibit." ' I went with him and he drew my attention to a small boy seated on a camp stool making a drawing of one of the great figures from Chartres. " Look, Goddard," he said, " there is the future President of the Royal Academy." ' An extraordinary prophecy, dealing with a boy still in his early teens !

" He was a very hard worker, leaving home about 9 a.m. for the School of Art and not returning until about 10.30 p.m., when he had supper and discussed his work and adventures during the day with my mother, always a very discerning and sympathetic person. But he always found time for a considerable amount of exercise. In addition to lawn-tennis, he was a good boxer. And always, as a boy, he was consistently good-tempered.

" His work was his life. I remember him bringing a youth out to Oriel to pose for him during the school holidays. He set up his easel under an apple tree, screening the nude with an erection of old sacking, a difficult subject with sunlight filtering through the leaves, and chilly work for the poor boy, who was compelled to stand in the water to get the right reflections. Mother helped to keep him alive with hot soup ; but the picture was never finished. I believe the model struck ! "

Orpen came to London to study at the Slade School when he was seventeen, and the years during which he was a Slade student were the most brilliant in the school's history. In 1899 he won the Composition Prize with his " Hamlet," which was exhibited in the Royal Academy in 1932.

There is a striking account published in *The Slade* of 1907 of Orpen's appearance on his arrival from Ireland : " There was more of the workman than the aeroplanist in Orpen with his unkempt brown hair, growing low over his forehead, concealing almost the two formidable frontal bumps hurled by his Creator, with graceful intention, above each of the keen deep-set grey eyes, and his truly Irish cheek-bones, nose and mouth, the latter feature wide



DEAR ALBERT. I FEAR WE ARE ALL GOING THE SAME ROAD —
 AUGUSTUS JOHN ALBERT RUTHERSTON CHARLES CONDER VIVIEN GUY HERBERT EVERETT
 A LETTER TO ALBERT RUTHERSTON



1907

YOUNG IRELAND

Grace Gifford

London Friends

open, giving the lie with unconscious humour to the expression of bland innocence ; no collar, but a wisp, that had once been green, tied around his neck with exquisite care, but utterly useless for purposes of decoration or protection alike. His attire tailed off, so to speak, with trousers matching his coat of such phenomenal bagginess at the knees as to warrant the suggestion of a life-long partnership."

The traditional figure of Bohemia ! But despite the green wisp round his neck and his baggy trouser knees, I doubt if Orpen was ever a Bohemian in the sense that some of his contemporaries were and have remained. He had for a while a cellar studio in Fitzroy Square. His picture of the Bloomsbury group suggests his friendships. He was, of course, on terms of easy intimacy with Augustus John and William Nicholson, the Rothensteins, Max Beerbohm, Charles Conder, James Pryde and a dozen others. But, from talking over these student days, I have a strong impression that he was very little influenced by his friends, and that as a boy he was as self-contained and as little dependent on friendship as he certainly was when I knew him well. Konody remarks on the amazing maturity of Orpen's work before he was twenty. This maturity as an artist must almost inevitably have been accompanied by a maturity of character that saved him from the wobbling and loafing and the adventuring up blind alleys in which youth, and particularly gifted youth, generally delights.

The Dublin boy, who would not be beaten at lawn-tennis and whose one real interest was his art, was unchanged by London. He worked steadily. He worked hard. And he worked his own way. He experimented. He was already versatile. "By all means let us strike out in every direction," he said years afterwards, "there is nothing worse than standing still."

He had none of the money troubles that are incidental to the beginnings of most artistic careers. His father made him an adequate allowance and, although it may have pleased him, as it pleased Stevenson, to affect poverty, the hall-mark of the young artist, it was never necessary for him to pull in his belt or to dodge importunate creditors. His friends were all rebels against academic tradition.

Ruskin & Mona Lisa

Orpen was never a rebel. He was just his own man, going his own way, doing his own work.

Orpen always hated pretence. He never pretended to himself. His judgments and his opinions were his own. He was never the gramophone of authority. As a student, he was advised to read Ruskin. He tried, was bored, and he said so. He went for the first time to Paris, among other things to admire the wonder of Mona Lisa—and he hated it. "There was I, unable to see anything except a slimily-painted bloated woman, with a slimily-dirty-looking face and a rather nasty sensual expression."

After he left the Slade School, he lived for a time with Hugh Lane. The late Lewis Hind has commented: "It was strange and fortunate that these two Irishmen, Orpen the natural craftsman, Lane the natural connoisseur, should have come together. No doubt they learned much from each other. The school of each was life, not books."

In 1901, when he was twenty-three, Orpen married Grace Knewstubb, the younger sister of Lady (William) Rothenstein. His pictures of his wife record her delightful girlish beauty, and their friends tell of her irrepressible high spirits. Orpen had his hours off. There are stories of riotous nights at Covent Garden fancy dress balls, and he had the curious liking of horse-play, that he retained to the end of his life. But generally the artist married was a very serious and strikingly silent young man, still tremendously industrious and keen. The allowance from his father was continued for some time after his marriage, his father requiring from him a detailed account of how it was spent. His carefully kept account books show that he had found a steady market for his pictures while he was still in his early twenties, and his income was considerable before he was thirty. His brother-in-law, William Rothenstein, was one of the first to foresee his brilliant career. In his most entertaining reminiscences, he recalls that "Robbie Ross used to say that people came into the Carfax and prostrated themselves before a John but always went off with an Orpen."

Years later, after his controversy with the late Lord Leverhulme, Orpen declared, "I am an artist and I care little for monetary success." That was not quite true of him at any time. He really cared a good deal for



PLATE III

1912

MARY ORPEN

commercial success—Lord Riddell has noted this—and he was a very shrewd man of business.

As a young man, he was cautious and he took his responsibilities very seriously. Just before the birth of his eldest daughter he felt that he ought, if possible, to secure an assured income, and he tried hard to get on to the staff of *Punch*. But his drawings were invariably returned. His genius as a caricaturist is evident in the series of pen-and-ink drawings he made during the Paris Peace Conference, and if, thirty years ago, *Punch* had accepted his work, his career would have been vastly different. Another enterprise of his early married years was the starting, with Augustus John, of an Art School in Chelsea.

Both before and after his marriage, Orpen made frequent visits to Ireland, and in the years before the war he had an appointment at the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art, for which he was well paid, but to which no definite duties were assigned. He was tremendously keen and became a great influence in the school. His eldest brother writes: "After he had married, I spent some delightful holidays with him at the Cliffs, Howth, which he rented for several summers, a place of great charm, looking out south over the sparkling waters of Dublin Bay, long, lovely, never-to-be-forgotten summer days, with frequent visits to the sea and the little enclosure called Bellingham's Harbour, where we bathed and sunned ourselves on the hot rocks. Bill was always at work and painted many pictures here. It was at the Cliffs that I realized what the 'urge' of the painter is."

"Bill was always at work," even on his holidays!

The Dublin of the first decade of the century, the Abbey Theatre Dublin, could never have been Orpen's spiritual home, though, as always with his fellow-countrymen, he was ardent in his appreciation of the fine characters of his Irish friends. He was perfervid in his adoration of George Moore. Hugh Lane, whom he aided in the foundation of the Metropolitan Art Gallery, was another of his friends. So were J. K. Stephens and Synge, whom he described as "those calm, modest, shy great men." But his most vivid Dublin memory was of the barmaid of the Theatre Royal. "Of all the wonderful, glorious things it has been



TANH-ALBERTO AND VENUS OF BRADFORD

A LETTER TO ALBERT RUTHERSTON

PLATE IV

1911

THE MODEL

A. W. Rich



1914

LILY CARSTAIRS

Mrs. Martin Saportas



Characteristics

my lot to see in the nature of womanhood, she was the most wonderful and glorious of all."

As time went on, the Irish visits became rarer, and he can hardly have visited Ireland after the war. London was his home because London was his workshop. To an extent, Paris became his workshop and his strange indifference to his environment is shown by the fact that, though for a considerable period he spent months every year in France, he never learned to speak French.

That was Orpen. He wanted nothing, or next to nothing, from the people with whom he rubbed shoulders. And, on the whole, it was the people of his own kind who attracted him least. I do not forget that when he was in London, he lunched nearly every day at the Arts Club in Dover Street. Nor do I forget that part of almost every Sunday was spent at the Chelsea Arts Club. But I am certain (I am, of course, writing of him when I knew him) that art talk, or indeed any sort of serious talk, bored him. He was always suspicious of the *poseur*. He had nothing but scorn for the lesser *intelligentzia*.

In 1914, Orpen was a man of thirty-six. Six years before, he had exhibited for the first time at the Royal Academy. In 1910 he had been elected an Associate. He had an assured position as a portrait painter. He was earning a large and an increasing income. He was industrious, methodical, as Lord Riddell says, "a devout adherent to the precepts of the late lamented Dr. Smiles." His only interests in life were his family and his work. "I was brought up on the Irish Question," he says in his book, *Stories of Old Ireland and Myself*, "but what the Irish Question was I have no idea." He had few prejudices and no opinions. He had a wilderness of acquaintances and few friends. He was genial, kindly and reserved. He talked very little and he talked very well. His judgments of his fellows were as acute as his powers of observation. But the judgments were only expressed in paint. He had taken the advice that Michael Davitt had given him: "Don't take any side, just live and learn to try to understand the beauties of this wonderful world."

The Orpen whom I knew, was only half born in 1914. My Orpen was the child of the war.

CHAPTER II

War & Peace

ORPEN THE MAN, IF NOT ORPEN THE ARTIST, WAS enormously affected and, indeed, fundamentally changed by his experiences in France in the last years of the war. Until the autumn of 1914, his life had been almost entirely detached from the world of affairs. He was an artist absorbed by his art, a craftsman enjoying his skill. He knew nothing of politics. He was not a very fervent British patriot. When the war began, he probably had the vaguest ideas as to what it was all about. Then he was brought hard up against realities. For a year and a half he lived close to the front line. He had daily acquaintance with war's beastliness. He dined every night with men almost certain to be killed the next day. And the shadow of Death made him shiver. He, who loved beauty with a passionate love, saw life reduced to terms of grotesque ugliness, and the whole thing was for him a grim and disgusting tragedy.

During the first fifteen months of the war, Orpen's national service was the painting of portraits for the funds of the Red Cross. With other famous painters, he sold blank canvases to the highest bidder, and the sums received were given to the Red Cross funds. At the end of 1915, with the launching of the Derby scheme, more direct national service was demanded, even of great painters still well within military age. At this time, Orpen was painting a portrait of Sir John Cowans, the Quartermaster-General, and the two men had become close friends. Soldiers always fascinated Orpen, and Sir John was one of the many soldier friends that the war gave him. When the General died, Orpen paid him fine and affectionate tribute :



PLATE VI

1915

MRS. OSCAR LEWISOHN

Edna May

PLATE VII

POILU & TOMMY



War Service

To-night my thoughts cannot conceive
That one so lovable so strong does
Not exist.
The heart so young so true so
Utterly devoid of Pride
Is gone, and we are left,
Bereft of all its love,
Alone.
That Heart saw through one's woes
And set them right, all,
All but his own
He never mentioned those
God rest his noble soul.

Through Cowans' influence, he obtained a commission in the Army Service Corps.

In May 1916, a little man, looking extremely uncomfortable and unhappy in khaki uniform, and wearing a military cap, much too large for him, reported at Kensington Barracks, the London headquarters of the Corps. He had had no sort of military training. He had never been drilled, and he knew nothing whatever about the business of soldiering. The adjutant, whose business it was to find him some sort of work, was T. T. Aikman, who was to become one of Orpen's most valued friends. Others of the officers at Kensington Barracks, with whom he was associated, were Brinsley Richards, the solicitor, and a fellow member of the Savile, and Harry Trevor, the musical critic.

For months, Orpen did routine office work with a zeal and persistence which astonished his comrades. Certainly many hundreds of caricatures were drawn on the margins of official papers, but it was natural to the man that whatever he had to do should be done with his might, and this applied to dull and unfamiliar office tasks, as it applied to the business of his life.

One of Orpen's pleasantest characteristics was his capacity to establish natural unpatronizing friendship with his social inferiors. It is, perhaps, true that, towards the end of his life, he was a little dazzled by the highly placed, but his judgment was too sound and his vision too clear for him to have been, at any time, anything like a snob, and it is worthy of record that Carrington, his favourite servant at

The Official War Artists

the Savile Club, was for years among his greatest friends. And while he was more or less playing at soldiers in London, one of his favourites was one Corporal Griffin, an old-time soldier, with whom he kept in touch long after the war was over. The work at Kensington Barracks was none too onerous, and there were long week-ends, often spent with John Cowans somewhere or the other in the country, the Quartermaster-General, as Orpen testified, always taking masses of work with him, with the little artist to supply the much needed humorous relief.

Towards the end of 1916, it was decided—Konody had a good deal to do with the decision—to send well-known English painters to the war zone to provide a permanent memorial of the trials and tribulations of the front. Orpen was one of the painters who were selected, and he went to France in January 1917. It was felt that a mere second-lieutenant would have no chance of establishing anything like amicable relations with the brass hats and, again thanks to Cowans, the second-lieutenant became a major in one day, a rate of promotion that can have few equals in military annals.

Orpen has himself told the story of his months in the war zone in his striking book, *An Onlooker in France*. He was nominally under the orders of a dug-out colonel of the Army Service Corps. But discipline sat very lightly on him. He made many friendships, notably with Ralph Maude, the A.P.M. at Amiens, the brother of Cyril Maude the actor, one of the best fellows who ever lived, and with Sir Philip Sassoon, who was then Lord Haig's private secretary. His book is a very faithful record of his experiences and of their reactions on his own personality. His relations with the different commanding officers, under whom he nominally served, supply not the least amusing episodes of his career. Rarely has a man, so little a soldier, been buttoned into a military tunic. He knew nothing of discipline. He simply had to jeer at ignorant pomposity. The story of his picture "The Refugee," originally called "The Spy," is characteristic, and had its uncomfortable consequences. Asked to explain how the picture came to be painted, he told (probably with the memory of Monna Vanna in his mind) a cock-and-bull story of going into the



CAPTAIN MAUDE & COLONEL DU TIEL IN THEIR CELLAR IN AMIENS

Military Discipline : The Spy

French lines, where a beautiful girl was being taken out to be shot as a spy. Knowing the susceptible hearts of the French *poilus*, she had arranged her clothing so that, at the moment before the order to fire was given, she was able, by undoing a button, to stand at the place of execution in all her naked loveliness—and, of course, the rifles were not fired. Orpen never supposed that the story would be taken seriously. But it was. And this and other irregularities caused him to be sent home, and it was only by the insistence of Lord Beaverbrook, then the head of the Ministry of Information, that he was permitted to return to the front in July 1918.

Lord Beaverbrook was for years one of Orpen's intimates. If a man's essentials are to be learned from his friendships, Orpen is illusive indeed. Lord Beaverbrook and Lord Riddell (two men in all things utterly unlike), John Cowans and Henry Wilson, Maurice Baring and Philip Sassoon, Adrian Stokes and Ivor Back ! It would be a jig-saw puzzle indeed to construct a man from such a veritable jumble of friendships. The intimacy of his friendships rarely lasted very long. His friends were types, intensely interesting to him for a time, but generally, when thoroughly studied and estimated, their interest began to wane. His approach to his fellows was always the approach of the portrait painter. He had to know them through and through. Then he was often bored.

The exhibition of his war pictures in London in 1918, before his return to Paris, made him something of a national figure, and back at the front, in the last stages of the war, Lord Beaverbrook saw to it that he was not again worried by pin-pricks from the brass hats.

The most interesting of his later experiences was painting Marshal Foch at his headquarters in the Château at Bon-Bon. "The three memories I brought away from Bon-Bon were maps, calmness and a certainty that the allies would be victorious," he wrote in his book.

Before the armistice Orpen was taken very ill and nearly died. He was left behind in Amiens, when the British forces withdrew. He was lonely and possibly more miserable than he had ever been in his life. General Cowans came to see him at Christmas and in January 1919,

Lord Riddell

still far from well, he went to Paris for the Peace Conference.

It was in Peace Congress Paris that my intimacy with Orpen began. He was still wearing the uniform of a Major in the Army Service Corps. He was still nominally a soldier, working for a soldier's pay. Augustus John was also in Paris, in the uniform of the Canadian army, greatly troubled by the daily enquiries of Canadian soldiers as to whether he came from Winnipeg or Montreal. I do not think that John did much work during the Congress, but Orpen worked for hours every day in his studio at the Hotel Astoria, where the British delegation had its offices. He was offered £30,000 for a series of Orpen portraits by an American admirer, but they were not his to sell.

Eheu fugaces! He and I and George Mair and George Adam generally met for an *apéritif* before lunch at the Café Fouquet in the Champs-Élysées and we saw a good deal of each other almost every day for nine months. I was the oldest man of the four, and now the others are all dead! George Mair was the director of the official Press Bureau, with Eric Maclagan, now the head of the South Kensington Museum, as his first-lieutenant. After the Congress, Mair went on to the staff of the League of Nations at Geneva and then came to London to join the staff of the *Evening Standard*. He was, I think, the most brilliant and certainly one of the best-informed journalists whom I ever knew, and he was a man of the greatest possible charm. But, alas, he was entirely without the power of self-discipline or self-control. And he died in his early forties. Adam was the Paris correspondent of *The Times*, another most accomplished journalist. He, too, died in the forties after some years of anxiety and disappointment.

Lord Riddell was another of Orpen's intimates. Riddell has a marvellous power of understanding, and there was a real bond of affection between him and Orpen. I think that it is probably true that Riddell and Aikman were the only two of Orpen's friends who had anything to give him that he really wanted very much. Aikman was his shrewd business adviser. To Riddell he talked more candidly than to anyone else and I, who worked for Riddell for five most



PLATE IX

1919

COLONEL A. E. LAWRENCE

PLATE X

1919

PRESIDENT WILSON

10/11/1951 - 11/11/1951

16th June 1913



President Wilson : Concentration

happy years, find in this fact evidence of Orpen's very shrewd judgment of his fellows.

Orpen's life in Paris was much like his later life in London. He played backgammon in the late afternoon in the Travellers' Club, and he generally disappeared to his hotel and his bed soon after ten. I have one vivid memory of the intensity with which he worked. President Wilson could only give him one sitting of one hour, and the President had agreed to be at the Astoria at half-past one on a blazing hot June day. Orpen lunched with me and Adam at the Café Fouquet and left us to keep his appointment. Wilson had a Paris bodyguard of American "sleuths," strange, tall, lean men, always chewing unlighted cigars. Orpen had taken off his tunic and was getting his paints ready, when one of the sleuths arrived and, looking down on the little man, demanded, "Sir William Orpen?" "Yes," said Orpen. "Then for God's sake," said the sleuth, "dress yourself and go and receive the President!" An hour afterwards, Orpen came back to Fouquet, white-faced, panting, his clothes heavy with perspiration, with the appearance of a runner who had just won a sprint race. Physically and mentally, he had used himself up. He had had one hour in which to use his vision in the discovery of Wilson and to use his skill to put on his canvas what he had discovered. And a devastating discovery it was—the lath painted to represent iron. In later years in London, I have seen similar examples of his concentration and absorption. He drove himself hard. It was for him all or nothing. It was first of all necessary for him to be interested. When sitters bored him, and they often did, the boredom is obvious in his work. When there was something worth while to discover, there was the irresistible urge to leave no stone unturned that the discovery might be complete.

This is confirmed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, one of his later sitters, who has written to me :

"The chief impression left on my mind was that of his intense concentration upon his work. He was so absorbed in it that, unlike some other portrait painters, he did not indulge in much conversation. It interested and, indeed, amused me to watch the penetrating gaze with which he studied his subject. To some of his sitters this process was

embarrassing. When I chaffed him about it, he told me of one lady who was made so nervous by this intense scrutiny that after enduring it for one or two days, she declined to continue her sittings.

"It has sometimes been said that he cared more for the technical problems of his portraits than for the personality of his subject, but it was not so. His first concern was to discover the personality whom he was to portray. I remember his telling me of an attempt to paint the portrait of a person very well-known in social circles. He said that he failed and gave up the attempt because beneath grace of figure and colour of dress he 'could not find a man to paint.' Doubtless in this process of the discovery of personality, which was usually very rapid, what he discovered was sometimes surprising and indeed disconcerting. It was not always what the sitter or his friends would call a 'likeness,' but it was his own impression, and once formed he insisted on keeping it. The risk of that impression being a surprise was one which those whom he painted had to face.

"In one of his letters the late Walter Raleigh divided portraits into two classes (I fear I cannot remember his exact words)—one, portraits which succeeded in recording a superficial likeness and so pleased the sitter and his friends and won popularity for the painter, but which after a time made one thankful that the sitter was dead; and the other, portraits which by their own force and artistic excellence survived the sitter and had an independent life of their own. This I am sure will be the destiny of the best of Orpen's portraits. Certainly it was a privilege to watch an artist at his work who gave himself with such whole-hearted and single-minded devotion to his art."

In his marvellously illustrated letters to Robin Legge (the drawings are evidence of his genius as a rather bitter caricaturist) there are swift impressions of the Conference and the delegates, most of them highly uncomplimentary. In one letter dated June 12th, 1919, he says of Clemenceau:

"Here is the man of the moment. He's getting a bit old, but is full of fire yet, and gives out Hell regularly at the sessions—the Zuko-Slavs and Jekno-Tabs are all in deadly awe of him—in fact, he really is an old terror—and he won't

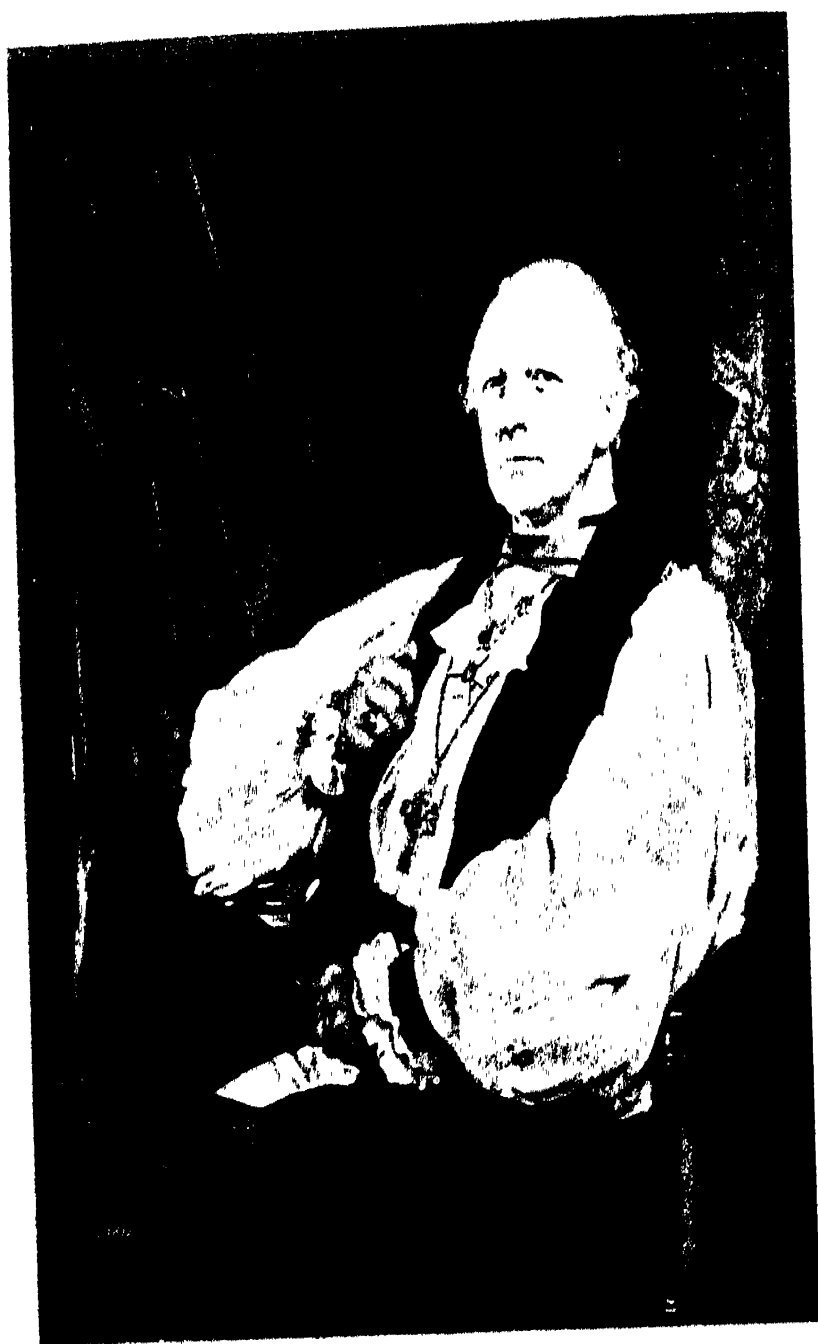


PLATE XI

1924

THE MOST REVEREND

COSMO GORDON LANG, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY



PLATE XII

1919

CARTOON

Letter to Robin Legge

Letters to Robin Legge

sit to Orps so I have to do hundreds of drawings of him at odd moments—when he can't get away."

And what clean, clear judgment there is in his remark that compared with Lord Balfour all the peace delegates appeared "woefully common."

Although he never learned French, and had little if any touch with the art life of Paris, Orpen loved the French capital, he loved Paris with the love of a painter, and he expressed his love in one of his vivid poems.

PARIS IN MARCH

Now from my open window
Old Paris lies below me,
Wicked, but beautiful,
Full of one-time glory,
Lavish with the luxury of the Past.

Her horizon, one graceful line
Of undulating beauty,
Swings from the Sacre Cœur to the Trocadero.
A vision,
Magnificent at any time,
Is now more wonderful
Than I have ever known it.

An immense white cloud
Towers up over the City,
High into the vast blue of Heaven.
As old as the Hills—
Yet more transient than a dewdrop,
Calm, serene,
Majestic and sublime—
This one great dazzling mass of glory,
Lit by the full splendour of the Sun
In grandeur and nobleness,
Overpowers one.

Below,
Tiny humans, moving about in the little streets,
Seem very small and insignificant.
All is silence,
Save for the dim drone of motors.

Under this magnificence, purple clouds
Move from the West.
Lower yet, the great city lies in shadow,
Dark, dismal, and of little interest
In comparison with the wonder above.

The End of the Peace Conference

Suddenly another bank of darker purple
Comes scudding up
Just over the housetops,
Everything is quickly changing ;
The room gets darker and darker ;
The white splendour is being covered over,
And is now shut out from sight.
Drops of rain splash the balcony,
Papers fly from the table,
The little humans dash about,
Wildly, without apparent purpose.
Motors hoot,
A flash !
A roar !
The storm has come ;
Beauty has given place to terror.

Orpen's revolt against "the frocks" and all their ways caused his memory to go wrong when he described the events that brought the Peace Conference to its climax. He says that on the night of the signing of the Peace Treaty "Paris was very calm, not the least excited." The exact opposite is the truth. I have never seen greater enthusiasm than there was among the immense crowd that surrounded the Palace of Versailles on that wonderful July day, and Paris, on that Saturday evening, did not go to bed at all. The streets were crammed, and particularly the Champs-Élysées, with men and women in almost a frenzy of excitement. The peace negotiations had lasted so long and at last 1870 had been revenged and Germany had signed away Alsace and Lorraine in the same room where, forty-seven years before, the two provinces had passed from France to the Hohenzollern empire.

It was in Paris that he began to write *The Onlooker in France*. I may perhaps be again permitted to quote William Rothenstein, who says :

"What a rare chance was Orpen's, to have passing before his easel all the historical figures of Europe. He was modest about his position. 'I am sorry to say,' he wrote, 'that I have scarcely got on with my work here at all this time—I mean the official work, but I have been painting some quite interesting people. They have also induced me to write a book about people and things I saw in Picardy and the

PLATE XIII

1919

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

QUAI D'ORSAY

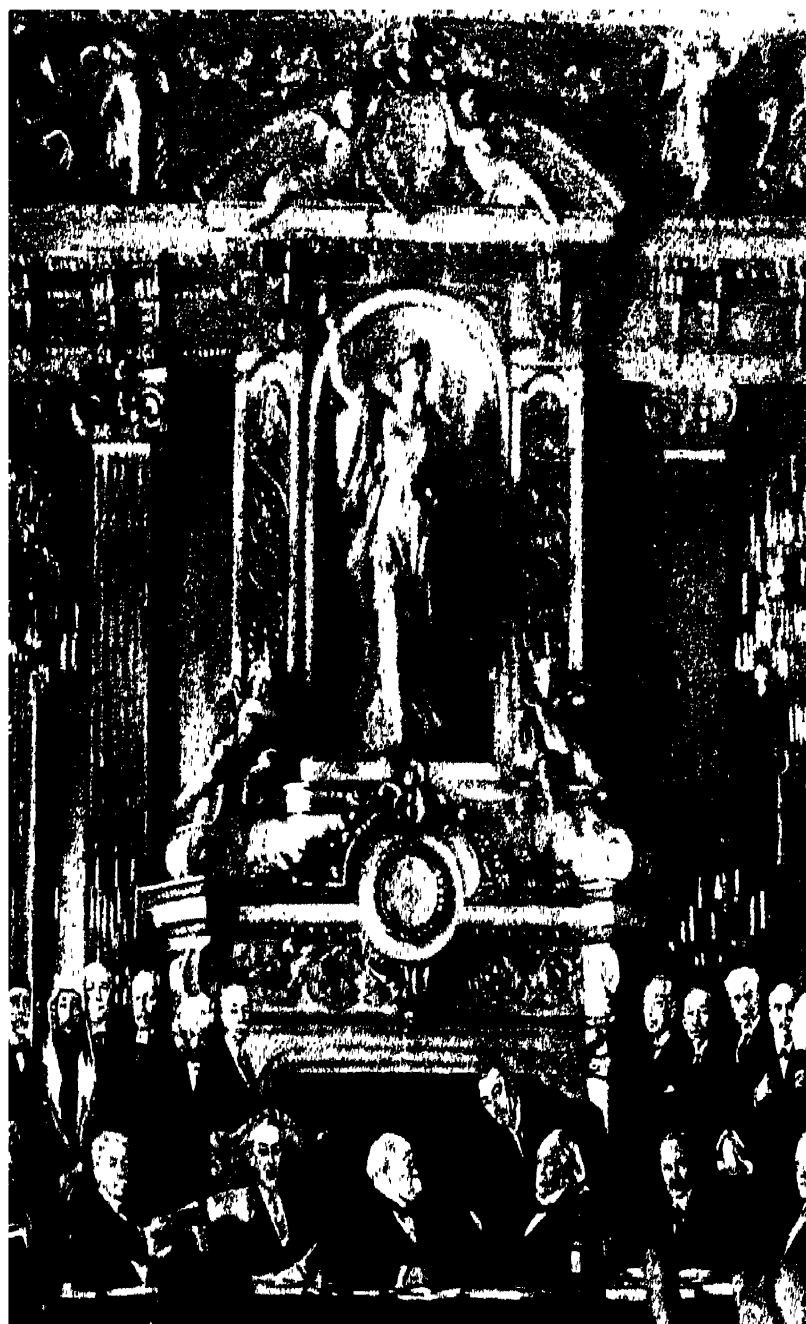




PLATE XIV

1924

MR. ANDREW MELLON

“The Onlooker in France”

North, and the Peace Conference. As I have no idea of writing, this is a wearing task—but it's great fun trying.' Orpen's book when it appeared showed him to be a witty and observant writer. I wondered that he found time in the midst of his heavy task to produce so considerable a work; but Orpen was indefatigable. The portraits he painted during these years of the war and afterwards during the Peace Conference are brilliantly vigorous and alive."

He was certainly indefatigable in Paris in 1919—and most certainly disillusioned.

CHAPTER III

The New Orpen

HE CAME BACK FROM PARIS TO HAVE TWELVE YEARS of supreme success. But I do not think that it is to be denied that, to an increasing extent, the success was a Dead Sea apple in his mouth. As I understood him, Orpen was a man who wanted something from life with all the intensity of his vivid personality. I do not believe that he ever quite knew what that something was, but whatever it was, I am quite sure that he never found it. All through his life, he worked with almost unparalleled industry and persistence. The list of his pictures, printed in the appendix, suggests that his output can have had few equals in the history of art. In a sense, he worked to live. Working was his life. His satisfaction in his supreme craftsmanship was a far more valued thing than his immense earnings. But in a sense, too, his energy was an attempt to escape from life.

Much has been written of his boyish fun, of his love of toys, of his capacity to play the fool without affectation. These are good things to remember. I shall never forget the hilarious fun of Orpen and the late Albert Ball, a grave and most lovable Civil Servant, pretending to be performing dogs, doing their tricks on a stone floor, to the command of the trainer, E. G. Boulenger. But Orpen, I am convinced, was always trying "to laugh it off." His war experiences had bitten into his soul. He was obsessed by the bitterness, the futility, the cruelty of life. He was always a realist. Perhaps Dublin Protestants generally are. He simply had to face facts and, when the facts were horrible, Orpen could never forget them. There was great prescience in the remark of the writer in the *Times Literary Supplement*: "For him life seems to be a queer ironic spectacle never to be taken very seriously lest it should hurt." But after the



1926

APRÈS LE BAIN, DIEPPE

Some Estimates of His Character

war years, he was compelled against his will, to take it seriously, except in odd moments of escape. And it hurt.

In *Time And Tide* for May 8th, 1925, there is an acute summary of Orpen :

"He is one of those men who, although desperately hard-working, are not totally absorbed in their profession. He talks less about art than most artists. He is interested in a hundred things, and especially in men. He tells a good story and has a large repertoire. And he likes good company, good nature and a variety of men. His catholic taste may be judged from his clubs—the Athenæum, Garrick, Chelsea Arts, Savile, Arts and Bucks. Quite without vanity, full of good nature, ready to do anyone a good turn, he has, on occasion, a sharp tongue. Sir Henry Wilson, who heard his tongue in full play pretty often in Paris in 1919, christened him 'Little Wasp.' Orpen has a gift for sensing men's weak spots. He sees through to their marrows with one glance of his smallish, sharp, penetrating eyes. Vanity, pretensions, humbug, pomposity, the 'official manner'; these are the things which draw his sting with a drop of acid wit on the end of it."

I do not altogether subscribe to this. He was elected to the Athenæum when he became an R.A.—I remember his comment when he received a letter notifying him of his election, with the request for the subscription and the entrance fee—but I imagine that his visits there were very few. It is certainly untrue to say that he was "quite without vanity." That would write him down inhuman, and Orpen was very human. Indeed, if to be vain is to realize the possession of great qualities and to enjoy the achievement that they make possible, then Orpen was, and quite properly, very vain. Certainly, his tongue could be waspish. Certainly, he hated the Podsnaps of this world. Certainly, his eyes were penetrating, often (have I not been among his sitters ?) seeing far more than it was at all comfortable that they should see. Without such powers of vision, the portrait painter is no more than the photographer. He painted many portraits of himself and he has said that "painting your own portrait is a lesson in humility." The painter who has found out his fellows must find out himself, and is perhaps a little shocked to discover that he is

The Mind behind the Face

much as the other men whom he has learned to know so well.

Mr. *Punch* once wrote :

Bill Orpen's rapier thrust is great ;
He'll paint your portrait while you wait ;
Though he does not want it known
He much prefers to paint his own.

And in these portraits of himself, I find complete proof of the state of mind of my friend. I remember particularly the portrait exhibited at the Royal Institute of Painters in Water-colour in 1929, to which the artist gave the title "Orpsie Boy." But the man knew that "Orpsie" was a boy no longer. At the bottom of the picture, he scrawled : "You are not so young as you were, my lad." Not so young, and for all the effort, really gay no longer.

"It is my business in life to study faces," Orpen once said. "It is also my lot in doing my job to get to know automatically what is in the mind that is behind the face, and I don't hesitate to say that there's no such thing as real beauty of face without beauty of mind."

The artist has a dual personality. Primarily his business is to make a picture. Orpen has said : "A woman enters the studio and pauses in the doorway. I may never have seen her before. But instantly I know whether she is wearing the right or the wrong dress. And if she is wearing the wrong one, I tactfully suggest that she goes away and changes it."

"A woman with fair gold hair and a pale complexion nearly always looks best in black. The material is not of great importance, but a black frame is the obvious setting for her."

"On the other hand, gold and silver are the most effective colours for the dark woman. The style, the draperies, the additional colours are, of course, capable of endless variation. But the main notes are of silver and gold."

"The auburn-haired girl looks charming in pure jade green. She is one of the most difficult of all types to dress rightly. Women with soft brown hair lend themselves to charming colour symphonies of brown—that most 'elastic' of all colours. Dresses, of course, are a vital part of a

PLATE XVI

1921

MRS. R. S. CLARK



full-length picture. In a 'head-and-shoulders' the less dress the better. Anything that detracts from the face is bad."

But mere decoration is not enough. The human element forces itself into consideration. Orpen has himself explained :

"You paint different men in different ways, in the same way that you talk to different men in different ways. Painting and talking are merely two different methods of expressing your own character and that of the other fellow.

"There may be something in Smith that challenges your intellect, that makes you brace your mind and talk in quick, decided sentences ; something in Jones makes you smile, some whimsical way of putting things that forbids you to make commonplace remarks about the weather ; or there may be a quality of nobility in Roberts that brings out the best in your character.

"As you would talk to these men, so would you paint them. You will paint Smith with a clarity and self-control which reflects pictorially the well-balanced intellect with which you are in contact.

"On the other hand, a humorist will call for, what I can only describe as the sense of the comic in one's paint. Not that you produce a caricature, but that you paint with a certain liveliness (I know a man who can make even a circle funny). And you will paint Roberts with the same unobtrusive reverence that you feel for him in actual life."

Orpen had found the world out. His keen vision had killed many illusions, but still to the end he found much that was pleasant and joyous and beautiful in the world. In an interview with him, printed in 1925, he said : "A year ago, when critics were telling the world how much it had deteriorated since the century before, I voiced the heresy that men and women were not only better-looking and therefore better-minded than they ever had been before, but that they were steadily improving. Every day confirms me in that belief.

"It is my business in life to study faces. It is also my lot in doing my job to get to know automatically what is in the mind that is behind the face, and I do not hesitate to say that there is no such thing as real beauty of face without

Beauty

beauty of mind. And there is a lot of both kinds of beauty to-day.

"Beauty is more than a regular bone structure covered with healthy flesh and skin, and whether a face is a fortune or not, it is always a hall-mark. A criminal's face proclaims his vice, whether he likes it or not, as clearly as an honest man's proclaims his worth.

"This is no more a coincidence than the fact that pipe-smokers from Mr. Baldwin downward cannot keep a crease in their trousers. All faces and all appearances are shaped through an attitude of mind. As you think, so you become.

"When I see better-looking men and women about me, I know they are inspired with better thoughts, and that these will be handed on to and multiplied in our great-grandchildren.

"Woman has not been left behind in the race. It may seem unfair to compare an outstanding beauty like Mrs. Siddons with the modern girl, but Miss 1924 does not suffer by comparison.

"The average of beauty is rising, and it is rising because there is going on a steady rise in virtue. I do not use the word in any priggish sense, but for want of a better term to describe the inherent decency of instinct and goodness of mind which are evident all around us.

"Exercise has improved our bodies, but it is the healthy mind that puts men and women into the sports field."

This interview inspired a pretty nonsense poem by Claude Burton, which may well be quoted here.

Sir William Orpen says our girls
Are prettier than they used to be,
And our supply of facial pearls
Proclaims an unexhausted sea ;
And I believe that he is right,
Unless I have defective sight,
For beauty never shone more bright—
At any rate for me.

Though Helen had the sort of face
For launching ships and burning towers,
A modern damsel of our race
Might easily have greater powers.

PLATE XVII

1923

THE RT. HON. THE VISCOUNT MILNER, K.G., G.C.B., K.C.B., G.C.M.G.



Clearness of Vision

The Greeks, who were extremely keen
On female beauty, would have been
In off the deep end had they seen
Such pretty girls as ours.

I'm certain that Sir William's right
In what he ventures to maintain ;
Those older beauties shone so bright
Because the other girls were plain.
Our English girls, it is allowed,
Stand out among a comely crowd,
Where others, formerly so proud,
Might well compete in vain.

But for all this admiration for the modern woman, Orpen was convinced that when she cut her hair she lost one of her chief glories.

"After six years' experience of it in which to arrive at a mature judgment," he said, "my conclusion is that women ought never to have cut their hair. Their heads are too badly shaped and their faces are too large. Bobbing was bad enough, shingling is worse, and as for an Eton Crop, I feel quite uncomfortable when I have to sit next to it at a theatre."

In the interesting and suggestive memory of Orpen, printed here as an appendix, Lord Riddell records that Orpen once told him that the successful portrait painter sees from the outside. "He depicts what could be seen by all if they had the eyes to see it." But that is the point. The successful portrait painter must have an abnormal power of vision. He sees far more than the outside of the platter. Mr. Beverley Nichols once wrote of Orpen: "It seemed to me that his mind was, in some ways, similar to that concave mirror which hangs on his wall facing the great window. It is a mirror in which one sees life a little more vividly than through one's own eyes—a mirror that gives a certain unity to even the most ragged composition."

It is surely the fact that in the work of such a man as Orpen, in his portraits and in his subject pictures, there is not only the revelation of the character of his sitter and the suggestive commentary on contemporary life, but also the revelation of the painter himself. Here is the picture ! Here, too, is the man who painted it !

The Painter's Personality

In his recently published study of Leonardo da Vinci Mr. Clifford Bax writes: "I believe a picture to be more than an object compounded of pigments and canvas or wood; I believe, as others will, if ever the world becomes satisfied that psychometry is a mode of genuine perception, that the painter unconsciously imparts an emanation of himself to the picture which he paints, and that the more intensely he feels while he is at work, the more lastingly will he transmit a ghost of his personality to the materials which he uses." I myself believe that in this Mr. Bax is exactly right, and I believe that a study of Orpen's later works entirely justifies my suggestion that the war wrought in him a fundamental spiritual change.

I have come across a striking suggestion of the revelations of the worker in his work written by Jessica Walker Stephens, who says:

"To see Sir William Orpen's pictures in numbers, with their uncannily powerful paint and tone and colour, their incisiveness of thought, sometimes resulting in tenderness, sometimes in scathing sarcasm, to marvel at his knowledge of men and his power of writing down their souls on canvas—to do all these things in a first survey is to know why his name has passed the stage of mere title and reached the final height of a diminutive.

"If we appreciate him, it is because he first appreciates us. He is a great lover and a great hater, for whom the medium of expression has, or appears to have, no insuperable difficulties. That which is best in us, from the mind of a Balfour to the loveliness of a baby or the inspirations of a humble female, such as Mrs. Everett, he shows. He also tells us that we can sink below the beast, and paints the beasts and men in such a way as to leave no doubt in the matter. He reveres us, laughs with and at us, or scorns and condemns us according to our deserts. This, surely, is the fulfilment of the artist's vocation, which in such hands is seen to be no small one."

This is confirmed by Orpen's portraits. Consider the portrait of Sir William MacCormick now in the Tate Gallery. Here the painter presents all those genial qualities of heart that earned for his sitter the affectionate nickname of "Merry Mac." Take the marvellous portrait of Ray



PLATE XVIII

1920

SIR WILLIAM MACCORMICK

Accuracy of Observation

Lankester, in my inexpert opinion among the greatest portraits Orpen painted. Here is a fine and truculent personality weltered into impotence by the years, a demonstration of the fearsome adventure of growing too old. Take the almost splendid geniality of the portrait of Ivor Back (frontispiece). One of Orpen's critics wrote: "He is obviously quite certain that both the patient and himself are going to spend a very jolly hour together." That is exactly true. Back, another great craftsman, enjoys his craft. And such is the charm of his personality, an operation by him has little terror. Never did man, not even Orpen, live and work with greater zest. That is what the portrait tells.

Meticulous accuracy of observation, together with the technical equipment to record exactly what is seen, is the quality of the artist. But such power of observation, with the cumulative knowledge, must have the most profound effect on the soul of the observer. Here most of us see as through the glass darkly. Orpen was face to face. And the result was a large measure of bitterness. This bitterness is expressed in his remarkable poem, "Myself, Hate and Love":

I hate the modern simp'ring girls,
Their foolish walk, their stupid curls.
I hate all over-dressed young "earls,"
And ladies' bodies coiled with pearls
To flaunt in earth's poor hungry face.

I hate society's worst disgrace,
Old women, who do keep their place
By mothering young men of talent
Until they spoil them,
Sicken and soil them,
With all their useless nutriment.

I hate myself
I hate them all,
All,
Except one man
Alone.
He I can admire
Truly
And with all my soul
Entire.

The World is all Awry

I mean the simple soldier man,
Who, when the Great War first began,
Just died, stone dead,
From lumps of lead,
In mire.
Or lived through hell,
Words cannot tell,
For four long years
And more
Of misery
Until the war
Was ended.

No man did more
Before.
No love has been
By this world seen
Like his, since Christ
Ascended.

I am a coward—
And I hate
Myself
As much, or more,
Than others of my breed.
Likewise,
I hate the bully,
I hate the "swank,"
I hate the braggart,
I hate the "crank."

I hate all men who talk too loud,
Like those who glory when a crowd
Doth cheer them
On, to make long-winded words
About themselves,
And how the nations all do need them,
They, and their cursed breed, to lead them. . . .

This is a cry from the heart. Orpen hates the bully, the swank, the braggart and the crank. And he hates himself, who is neither bully nor swank nor braggart nor crank. The world is all awry. And life is unendurable unless one learns to laugh at it all. This, the almost desperate determination to laugh, was expressed in an article of his which appeared in the *Daily Express* of June 23rd, 1927, in which he said:

"The friendly man never takes himself too seriously. I do not mean that he is necessarily the victim of a false and

PLATE XIX

1929

SIR RAY LANKESTER



I am a Joke

artificial modesty, but that he does not suffer from the illusion that he is the only pebble on the beach. He does not open his life in a room ornamented by framed photographs of 'a celebrity at various ages.'

"He has learned one of the great lessons of life—that is, to laugh at himself, and laughing at himself, that it is permissible to laugh at other people, too; to share in the great joke of life, for as has been said somewhere, there is no more profound truth than that this is a funny world.

"Friendship without laughter seems to me an impossibility, and a laughing friendship that is, perhaps, not too intimate—for we learn rather to dread the Jonathan and David friendship of youth—but which is understanding and sympathetic, which makes few demands, and certainly asks for rather less than it is ready to give, is a compensation for disappointment and irritation, and is a link, mystical because it is often so irrational, between the individual and the universe. . . .

"Every child should be taught to conjugate the verb: 'I am a joke, thou art a joke, he is a joke; we are jokes, you are jokes, they are jokes.'

"The struggling man is a joke, the successful man is a far greater joke. The world is a joke, a joke of tremendous significance, and the laughter is no less defensible and indeed no less necessary because there are also occasions for tears and for sighs."

Orpen lived in the Palace of Truth. For most of us, happiness is only possible because we spend our days in the Valley of Illusion. It is lucky for us not to realize the truth about our friends. It is luckier still that we do not know ourselves too well. There was no such relief for Orpen. But while his clear vision revealed the shams of politicians and the greatness of soldiers—it was a little odd that the soldier was the only man who ever dazzled him—it enabled him to understand that, while no man may be so white as he paints himself, so he is never so black as he is painted by others.

"To the Unknown British Soldier in France"

IN HIS REMARKABLE BOOK, "THE MAN, SHAKESPEARE," Frank Harris says: "As it is the object of a general to win battles, so it is the life-work of the artist to show himself to us and the completeness with which he reveals his own individuality is perhaps the best measure of his genius." This is, of course, an anticipation of the passage I have quoted from Mr. Clifford Bax. The artist who does not tell us a great deal about himself, tells us nothing about anything. That is why so many art exhibitions are so dull and so many books unreadable. There is a suggestion of the tragic in the man dowered with considerable expert skill, but incapable of using that skill for any real achievement. Dexterity of hand is often accompanied by dryness of imagination and sterility of intellect. The result is far more pitiful than a blind Raphael fumbling with his palette. Orpen had a tremendous technical equipment, vivid imagination, keen intellect, and strong and definite character. And every picture that he painted was a chapter of autobiography. The force that sent him to his studio, to work for more hours a day than a bank clerk spends at his desk, was, fundamentally, the sheer necessity that he felt for self-revelation, the almost fierce determination to put on to canvas the stirrings of his soul.

There are three of his pictures that seem to me most dramatically revealing of the man who painted them—
 —"The Black Cap," "Man versus Beast" and "The Unknown Soldier."

In the winter of 1921, Orpen sat through the Landru trial, and he wrote a very remarkable description of that notorious French criminal.

"His long, thin nose gives remarkable character to his



PLATE XX

1928

THE BLACK CAP

The Landru Trial

face, and it is seldom that one finds a nose which narrows so noticeably above the nostrils.

"I cannot say that he has to my mind the appearance of a criminal. His dominant expression seems to me to be one of kindness and, in his lucid intervals, I have no doubt that he is a man of amiable disposition.

"In my opinion Landru is liable to attacks of savage lunacy, in which he has committed crimes that he has forgotten. Cupidity at any rate can hardly have been his motive, for his murders brought him but the scantiest profit. . . .

"He had sat for some hours and listened to the Public Prosecutor, who in the end banged his hands down on the rostrum, sweating, coughing, his eyes bulging out from his fat, red face, mopping his forehead, and hurling words of thunder at Landru: 'Vile beast, scum that must be removed from the earth, murderer, burner, we must have your head' . . .

"A few minutes after all this fury had been hurled at him, this weak, pale-faced man raised his suffering body and left the court, giving kindly smiles and gestures to his friends on the way to his cell—while the babbling crowd in the room surged and buffeted each other to get forward for a closer look at him.

"Having seen him, I cannot believe that, if he murdered these poor people, he ever did it in cold blood for the paltry sums of money it has been proved he received from their disappearance or murders. No, it must have been sensual blood-lust which caught him at times and made him mad, after which he returned to his normal, kind, contented, humdrum life until the madness took him again."

The scene was a grotesque Gilbertian tragedy. The Enemy of Society a kindly amicable man. The defenders and avengers of society, vulgar, blustering, coarse. The representatives of society mere chattering monkeys. The one figure of dignity was the murderer in the dock.

What is the meaning of it all? What is the good of it all? Those were the questions that Orpen was asking himself when he sat in the stuffy atmosphere of the French court. They were the questions that he continually asked himself. And he never found satisfactory replies.

The Black Cap

As he saw it, the law court is a cage from which there is no escape. Innocent men are sometimes condemned. Guilty men are rarely acquitted. And guilty men are often pleasant men and still more often young and strong men. And to Orpen there was something outrageous in senility, with a posy by its side and sweet herbs scattered at its feet, sending, as a matter of course, youth and strength to the misery of Dartmoor.

Orpen had the Landru case in mind when he painted the "Black Cap." He had found himself keenly sympathizing with a murderer, and a particularly brutal murderer, being harried to the guillotine by the rude, unimaginative hounds of the law. And in the Law Courts he had found the same pretence and hypocrisy that sickened him in the politicians. On the bench, the wigs and the ruffles and comfortable personal security. In the counsels' seats, the skilled advocates, the ruthless eager hounds of the law. In the dock, the quarry, cornered, bewildered, hopeless, the victim of passion or circumstances.

"I am always," Max Beerbohm once said, "on the side of the wrongdoers. They have such a dreadfully bad time." Orpen agreed with Max. When he painted the aged judge, tripping gaily and fantastically escorted, to send a fellow to his death, he was expressing his disgust at the pompous futilities that are the bases of civilized society; the futilities that make H. G. Wells furiously angry. They move Wells to vehement denunciation. They made Orpen sad and bitter.

There is the same bitter reflection in "Man versus Beast." The criminal seemed to Orpen infinitely finer than the judge, the beast was infinitely finer than the man. Let it be admitted that he was suffering from an excess of disillusionment, that he had come to exaggerate life's evil. That was his mood, and he told the truth as he saw it, thereby mightily ruffling the sentimentalists. One critic wrote:

"The downfall and decadence of every nation begins with the degradation of its art and literature by decadents who claim the right of 'self-expression.' At the private view of the Royal Academy we were struck by the decadence shown in certain pictures. There is one in particular



PLATE XXI

DEAD GERMANS IN A TRENCH

To the Unknown Soldier

by Sir William Orpen, R.A., which, following his horrible picture a year or two ago of the corpses guarding the Alley of Fame, labels him as a mere crank. It is sad to see art like his debased to the depths of the gutter of Paris."

This judgment is amazing. It means that it is degrading to be sincere, it is decadent to admit that gutters exist and that sanitary inspectors are necessary public officials, it is crankiness to see anything in the world but sunshine and flowers and beauty, that it is the business of the painter to paint nothing but smiling orchards, calm seas, fat sheep and happy handsome lovers, certain of an ample income. The suggestion that it is indefensible for the artist to record his moods of depression and bitterness is, of course, preposterous. But it is beside the point. The important point is that in these pictures of his the real Orpen is to be found.

"To the Unknown Warrior," the picture which his critic describes as "the corpses guarding the Alley of Fame," is the pictorial summary of his book *An Onlooker in France*. Disregarding all question of craftsmanship "The Unknown Soldier" seems to me perhaps the greatest picture of Orpen's post-war years. It is an abrupt, brutal, tremendous presentation of the stark futility of war and of the hopeless blundering that followed the war, and is the inevitable consequence of the war spirit. As I have said, I saw Orpen almost every day in 1919, when he was painting the Peace Conference delegates in his studio in the Hotel Astoria. While he was seeing politicians, and seeing through them, he was thinking all the time of the men at the front, Tom and Fred and the other boys whom he had come to love and who were nearly all dead. He said of Maurice Baring's *In Memoriam*, Baring's tribute to his friend Lord Lucas, that he thought it by far the greatest work of art the war had produced. I should not call his own *An Onlooker in France* a great work of art, but it is one of the most effective pacifist documents that was ever printed. I do not forget Barbusse. I do not forget Montague. I do not forget Philip Gibbs, whom Orpen met in France and whom he understood so thoroughly. "Philip Gibbs was also there—despondent, gloomy, nervy, realizing to the full the horror of the whole business, his face drawn very

“ *A Crowd of Little Men* ”

fine, an intense sadness in his very kind eyes.” Barbusse, Montague, Gibbs, three idealists and skilled professional writers. Orpen was a realist and an amateur writer. William Rothenstein says that his book is witty. Certainly there are fun and laughter in it, but if ever Orpen struggled to “ laugh it off ” it was when he was writing *An Onlooker in France*.

In his picture, as in his book, he tells the whole truth. In Amiens he saw doped British soldiers, morally broken by the trenches, caring nothing for the consequences, the easy victims of French women, “ the riff-raff of Paris, the expelled from Rouen, in fact the badly diseased from all parts of France.” At the front he watched men slouching out of the line—“ some sick ; some with trench feet ; some on stretchers ; some walking ; worn, sad and dirty—all stumbling in the glare. The General spoke to each as they passed. I noticed their faces had no change of expression. Their eyes were wide open, the pupils very small, and their mouths sagged a bit. They seemed like men in a dream, hardly realizing where they were or what they were doing. They showed no sign of pleasure at the idea of leaving Hell for a bit. It was as if they had gone through so much that nothing mattered.”

And he had seen the young dead, and they had moved him to the touching poem in his book, which concludes :

A daffodil is by his head, and his curly, golden
Hair is moving in the slight breeze.
He, the man who died in “ No Man’s Land,” doing
Some great act of bravery for his comrades and
Country——
Here he lies, Pure and Holy, his face upward turned ;
No earth between him and his Maker.
I have no right to be so near.

Orpen rarely talked seriously. He was never a man who wore his heart on his sleeve. But his scorn was frequently and openly expressed. “ It was all like *opéra bouffe*.” We all felt it in the Paris of 1919—the pettiness, the ignorance, the playing for position, the entire lack of anything like settled statesmanship, a great job left to a crowd of little men. I said to him of his picture of one of the Dominions’ delegates : “ Billy, you have made So-and-so look like a

PLATE XXII

TO THE UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER IN FRANCE



The Signing of the Treaty

Walworth Road photographer.” “And that’s exactly what he is,” was his reply, “a damned Walworth Road photographer.”

The picture of President Wilson is a bitter but, I think, a not unfair criticism of the Wilson of Paris. The pen-and-ink sketch in one of the Robin Legge letters, is even more revealing. Here is the self-sufficient idealist, the man who fought like a wild-cat for the things that did not matter and quietly surrendered to Clemenceau on all essentials, the lath painted to look like iron.

The months went by, and at last came the signing of the treaty in the Salle des Miroirs at Versailles. Orpen was commissioned to paint the scene for the Imperial War Museum. He made his sketches. He worked for nine months putting in the portraits of over forty statesmen and generals. Then he rubbed them all out. His soul revolted. He must tell the truth. And in his picture, the body of the Unknown Soldier lies in the Salle des Miroirs, guarded by two gaunt wraiths from the trenches.

The picture was exhibited in the Royal Academy of 1923, and Sir Martin Conway refused it for the Museum. It was not what the “frocks” wanted.

“I knew they would not understand what my picture was all about,” he said. “When I rubbed out the portraits five months ago I knew I was thereby forfeiting my commission. But with all those thirty-nine—or, was it forty-two?—statesmen and generals in the picture it was all wrong. Tone, colour, composition—all wrong. It took me nine months of incessant painting to put in the portraits that I afterwards erased. I put them in for the Imperial War Museum. I took them out again for my own sake, and the pleasure this completed picture gives me, however critics may rage, is worth the £2000 it has cost me.”

The exhibition of the picture brought him many touching letters. One correspondent wrote:

“Your wonderful picture the ‘Peace Conference’ represents *Real Peace* because you are fed up with the mockery of Peace . . . and covered it with a layer of paint. Your picture reveals, apart from the artist, a man of courage, honesty and sincerity. You will live in history as the real peace-maker, bravo, God bless you.”

"To the Unknown British Soldier"

From Pennsylvania, an American soldier wrote him :

"I note in the newspapers that the Imperial War Museum has refused to buy your painting 'To an Unknown Soldier in France,' because it does not show what they wished it to show—the great ones who signed the Versailles Treaty. As an American 'dough-boy,' who suffered in common with the 'Tommies' in Belgium and France, permit me to congratulate you, sir, on your critics. Ignorance, pigmy-mindedness and self-exaltation will not down your famous painting. I venture the assertion that when the 'great ones' are gone and forgotten and their destructive minds, who are even now plotting for war, are in dust, your painting will occupy an honoured place in the very museum from which it is now rejected by the temporary custodians of that museum."

And most touching and understanding of all, is the letter from an English mother :

"I am just a little English mother whose only child lies in an unknown grave in France, & on Saturday my husband & I visited the Royal Academy & saw your picture 'To the Unknown British Soldier in France' & I felt I should so like to thank you for placing in your beautiful picture instead of living men of renown, the simple parable of sacrifice. To me, the youth of the guarding figures appealed as no doubt it will for all time to mothers, the bright green cord with its crosses of gold and crowns at each end symbolized Sacrifice as seen on the 'other side,' & I noticed that although the heroes were connected by that cord to the heavenly beings, the cord although touching the earth did not approach the coffin, there was no need, for only the mortal remains were there, the Sacrifice had already been made.

"Sometimes, we who gave our loved ones in the Great War, wonder whether the peace was worth the terrible cost, folks forget so soon, & so we thank great men who with pen, or brush endeavour to keep the memory of our dear dead lad's supreme sacrifice in remembrance."

Disillusionment

IT IS I CONSIDER MOST REMARKABLE AND SUGGESTIVE that a man who, until 1914, had been just a painter of genius with the smallest possible interest in public affairs and the slenderest contact with contemporary life, should, ten years later, have expressed, with superb skill, the sorrow and the resentment of simple men and women against the folly and the wickedness of the times. In his ceaseless quest for himself, Orpen became a human figure, far greater than he himself ever understood. For all of us, not very young in 1914, the war was the killer of illusion, though it has become, such is the irony inherent in human affairs, the creator of greater illusions. I suppose it would be true to say that there is not one single man of vision, who had personal experience of war or who had sufficient intelligence to estimate the war's reaction on individual character and on social life, who has not been moved to question all those assumptions concerning human affairs, which had been accepted as undeniable before 1914. Since 1919, the terms "patriotism" and "nationalism" must for men and women, gifted with the smallest power of imagination, be followed by a permanent note of interrogation. None the less, those later years have seen an intensification of nationalism all over the world with all the narrow destructive consequences of nationalism.

Orpen, as I have said, went straight from the war zone, filled with admiring affection for the men, many of them mere boys, who had paid the price for the blundering of politicians and the insensate ambition of monarchs and statesmen, to Peace Conference Paris, where politicians

Sadness & Stupidity

went on blundering, as though there had been no corpses in the Flanders mud and treaties were devised to satisfy narrow, nationalist ambitions, as though nationalist ambitions had not turned half Europe into a shambles for four years. Paris was gay enough in 1919. Orpen spent a great part of his leisure with the special correspondents at the Conference and, from the very nature of their calling, journalists have short memories. For them it is to-day that matters. Yesterday is dead and may well be forgotten. The journalists forgot. The politicians, intriguing against each other for position, forgot. But Orpen could never forget. The aftermath of the war was crazier, more bewildering, and infinitely less heroic than the war itself. As he painted in his studio in the Hotel Astoria, life seemed to him both sad and stupid, and Orpen loathed the sadness and the stupidity.

The peculiar value of his "Unknown Soldier" and all that it suggests, regarded, of course, not as a work of art but as a vital chapter of autobiography, is that it was, as it were, wrung from him against his will. The picture brings to my mind the war poems of Siegfried Sassoon's, but Siegfried Sassoon began the war a rebel against social institutions and he was probably always extremely doubtful of the spiritual value of patriotism. The war inspired his tremendously powerful pacifist writing, but it merely intensified a pre-existing mood. The trenches had exactly the spiritual effect on Siegfried Sassoon that they would have been expected to have.

In Orpen the protest was something new and strange. He had never thought very much about the muddle, the stupidity, the horror existing at the heart of human society. He had lived within a narrow circle. The war forced him into the great world. His blinds were pulled up. He was taken by the scruff of his neck and forced to look out of his window and what he saw hurt him, appalled him, disgusted him. And it made him. The craftsman became an historian, the painter became a rebel. The happy-hearted artist was saddened into the man, who wrote the poem, which he sent to Lord Riddell and which I do not think has before been printed :

The World Unmasked

THOUGHTS IN THE NIGHT

Each night my thoughts run riot
Attainment, love, desire
I soar on each celestial cloud
High from the sordid mire
Of Earth.
And so night passes by
Till dawn breaks, with a sigh,
Realities, banalities,
Confronting me
Ever.
And I must strive,
Or lie, unto myself,
Or die
Of Boredom, dire
Till thoughts begin to soar
Once more
And night comes with desire.

It has been suggested that Orpen was something of a *poseur*, that he was anxious to create for the world a mythical Orpen, entirely unlike the reality. In a sense, that was true. The Orpen who bought a hurdy-gurdy and enlivened lunchtime at the Arts Club with the performance of "Abide with Me," was an attractive eccentric, whose jokes the Press loved to chronicle. The fun was spontaneous enough, and I do not doubt that Orpen enjoyed both the publicity and the illusion which he had created. It pleased him to be regarded as a playboy. He never talked about himself. But he painted himself more clearly than he realized, far more clearly than he wished. That was perhaps his tragedy. He could never keep his secrets. When he painted—and it was only when he painted that he really lived—he was fated to give himself away. He was a little afraid of the man who is revealed in his pictures. When he left his studio he itched to be the "Orpsie boy" of Fleet Street legend and not the man who had seen horrors and been seared by hypocrisy.

He wanted to hide his true self from his fellows. He wanted, far more, to hide his true self from himself. It pleased him to be regarded as the R.A. and the K.B.E. who was better known as "bloody old Bill." But Orps, as the years went on, grew more disillusioned, harder, a little

weary of always seeking and rarely finding. He went on playing, but it was evident enough to his friends that the play began to lose its zest, and that the escape became more and more difficult. The toys had lost their attractions. "Dressing up" became something of a bore.

I am not quite sure how far Orpen was appreciative of the work of other artists, since it was only on the rarest occasions that he could be induced to talk about pictures to the inexpert. And in this respect, Konody is much better informed than I am. He was, however, always emphatic in his admiration for Sargent and Augustus John and his attitude of mind to the moderns was expressed in an interview with Mr. Beverley Nichols, who asked him his opinion of Picasso. The reply was characteristically forceful:

"I think," said Orpen, "the habit of putting bits of string and glass eyes and damned heaps of gravel on canvas has had an awfully bad effect on a lot of people. I went to an exhibition in Paris not long ago and the whole thing was blasted bits of string and newspaper and circles and triangles and the Lord knows what. I'm sure that a lot of those chaps were kidding. I'm equally sure that a lot of them were not. In any case, I'm shy about condemning anything I don't happen to understand."

Orpen possessed a genius for sympathetic friendship. I do not think that he ever felt any great need for friendship for himself. He immensely enjoyed being the centre of a laughing crowd, who between working hours were irresponsible and frivolous. But fundamentally he was a lonely man, very much a cat who walked by himself.

But if there was little that his fellows had to give him, for which he had any great need, there was much that he had to give them and he gave it with open hands. I am not thinking of his consistent generosity, often shown in the most delicate and attractive manner, or of the gifts, euphemistically called loans, to the harassed and impecunious. I have in mind—of this I have had personal experience—his rare power to realize exactly what a friend is suffering, when he is going through deep waters, and to know exactly what the right word and the right gesture must mean for him.

His Sympathetic Understanding

The well-intentioned so often woefully blunder. It is so easy for all of us to hurt when we are most eager to heal. But Orpen possessed the healing touch. Perhaps this was because he saw so clearly and understood so completely. No man can leave his friends with a more precious memory than that he has ministered to them in their affliction and solaced them in their sorrow. And I am one of many men to whom Orpen is neither the great painter nor the disillusioned observer, but the most understanding of friends.

Orpen was a realist. He was certainly not a materialist. He had an odd sort of religious feeling, indefinite, ill-defined, but real and vital. At the bottom of his heart, he was convinced that there was some way out of the maze, even though he himself might never find it. If there is no way out, then we must eat, drink and be as merry as we can. If there is a way out, it must, perforce, be sought for even if it be never found.

Orpen has been compared with Hogarth. There is sometimes in his work, says William Rothenstein, "a touch of Hogarth's frolic." I am not quite sure that I know what is meant by Hogarth's "frolic," but (here perhaps I am going outside my province) in those pictures, in which I have tried to find the qualities of the man who painted them, Orpen certainly, himself, challenges comparison with the greatest of all English pictorial satirists, unequalled, as Austin Dobson has said, for "his fancy and invention in the decoration of his story and his merciless anatomy and exposure of folly and wickedness."

Hogarth and Orpen had many personal characteristics in common. Austin Dobson has described Hogarth as "a blue eyed, honest, combative, little man, thoroughly insular in his prejudices and antipathies, fond of flattery, sensitive like most satirists, a good friend, an intractable enemy, ambitious, as he somewhere says 'in all things to be singular.'" Orpen had blue eyes. Orpen was honest in the finest sense, honest to himself. An American writer has called his honesty "crystalline." It was sharp and it was combative. "An artist's duty," he said, "is not to paint what is pleasant, but what is true."

Like Hogarth again, Orpen was a little man. Sir Henry Wilson called him "Little Wasp," and it seems to me

The Leverhulme Portrait

without much justification. If Austin Dobson means to say that Hogarth was thoroughly English in his prejudices and antipathies when he calls him "thoroughly insular," then in this respect there was nothing of Hogarth in Orpen. He was neither thoroughly English nor thoroughly Irish. He was thoroughly Orpen. I think that Orpen was fond of flattery. Towards the end of his life, much of his leisure was spent with men who had been the object of his generosity and were certainly unwilling to trouble him with undesired criticism. With Hogarth, he was sensitive and a good friend. But he could never have been an "intractable" enemy. I know nothing of his enmities. There were a number of people whom he did not like, and he did not bother to hide his dislike. Sometimes, indeed, it was publicly expressed to the discomfort of his friends. But he would never have hit really to hurt. He would never have taken the trouble.

He was, indeed, vastly annoyed by the publicity given to his dispute with the late Lord Leverhulme, in the silly season of 1921, a time when newspapers are always hard put to it to provide amusement for their readers. About a year before, Lord Leverhulme had made Augustus John furiously angry by cutting down a portrait that John had painted of him to make it fit the place where he had decided to hang it. Orpen painted Lord Leverhulme in his robes as Mayor of Bolton. When first approached he had quoted his charges as one thousand pounds for head and shoulders, fifteen hundred pounds for a half- or three-quarter length and two thousand pounds for a full length. Lord Leverhulme wanted a full length, perhaps because, as it was wickedly suggested, "like Sir Willoughby Patterne he has a leg which the mayoral robes must not be allowed to curtain." But the artist urged that a finer artistic effect would be obtained, if Lord Leverhulme were painted sitting instead of standing. To this he agreed. The portrait was delivered and then there was a disagreement as to whether it should be paid for as a half-length or a full length. "The portrait," Orpen insisted, "is a very big canvas and to say nothing of my artistic labours, there is just as much paint and varnish used in it as if he had been standing and not sitting." For some days the newspapers



PLATE XXIII

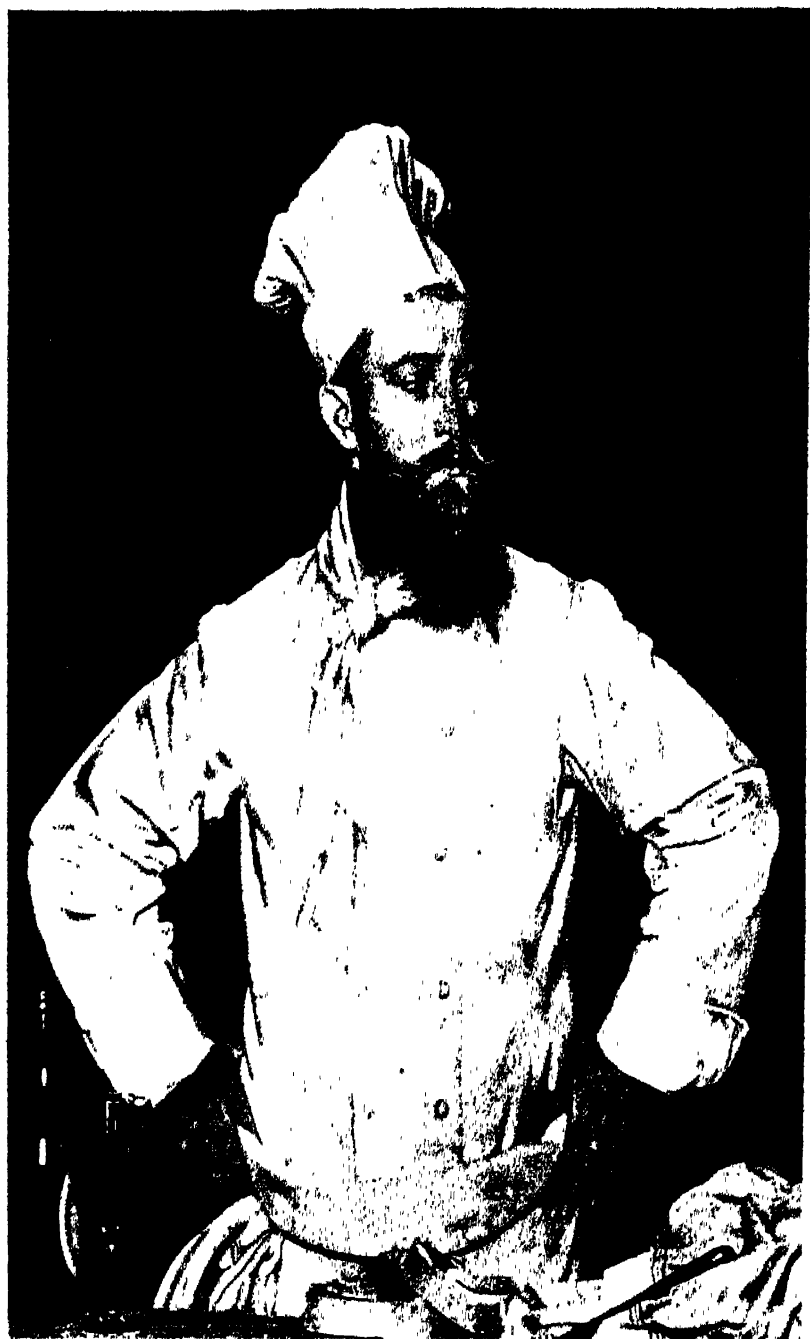
1921

THE RT. HON. THE VISCOUNT LEVERHULME

PLATE XXIV

1921

THE CHEF



“The Chef”

were filled with the discussion as to whether artists should be paid so much a square foot, Mr. Bernard Shaw intervening to urge that this was the only rational mode of payment. It was suggested that Sir David Murray should act as arbitrator between the painter and his sitter but Sir David, cautious Scot as he is, declined the honour, and finally the dispute was amicably settled, Orpen protesting that Lord Leverhulme was “a sweet old man” and that there had been nothing between them except a good-tempered difference of opinion. Orpen resembled Hogarth in his ambition “in all things to be singular.” There was nothing of the artist in his dapper appearance. He kept office hours in his studio and then played the hurdy-gurdy at lunch-time.

Hogarth lived to be nearly seventy and, during his lifetime, he was never recognized as the genius that he was. Orpen died at fifty-two, full of honours if not full of years. His pre-eminence was fully recognized by the men of his own craft. He was President of the International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers, and of the Royal Water Colour Society, and he might have been President of the Royal Academy had he desired that distinction. As a matter of fact, he declined to stand because he dreaded the business of making formal speeches. He enjoyed his distinctions. He certainly enjoyed his intimacy with men and women, whose names appear regularly in the Court Circular. Perhaps he was a little dazzled, for, as it seems to me, he often exaggerated their good points and missed their frequent pettiness. Whether their names were known or unknown, it was always the obvious people who attracted Orpen. He suspected subtlety. He liked Lord Derby, whom he described as “that joyous, bluff, big-hearted Englishman,” for exactly the same reasons as he liked Carrington and Corporal Griffin.

It is not to be supposed that every simple man attracted Orpen just because he was simple, for he knew quite well that the simple may be as shallow and uninteresting as the pseudo-subtle often are. His portrait of the grill *chef* of the Paris Hotel Chatham illustrates what I mean. Orpen and I made the acquaintance of the *chef* about the same time (he was, by the way, the inferior, both as man and artist,

Love of Ceremonial

of the gentleman who holds the same high and responsible office at Sweeting's in Brighton), and it was his picturesque appearance that attracted Orpen and gave the *chef* a brief period of fame in London and such immortality as is supplied by the Diploma Gallery of the Royal Academy. But the portrait is not among the great successes, perhaps because the *chef* bored the painter long before the portrait was finished.

"He's a good enough fellow," Orpen said of the *chef*, "but he got more out of the picture than I did, for I gave it away while he got a good twenty francs' worth of whiskey at each sitting. And he didn't even thank me. Indeed he thinks he's done me a good turn, and has been heard to say, 'Good thing for Sir William that he met me.'"

It was suggested to Orpen that he should follow the example of John Millais and allow reproductions of "The Chef" to be printed on the labels of "one of the highest class products in the kingdom." But he refused even though he was assured that "the reproduction of your painting would have a world-wide effect in raising and elevating the tone of advertising!"

In common with all other men, Orpen had his inconsistencies. He was naturally precise and forms and ceremonies mightily appealed to him. Yet he would sometimes disregard precedent or appear to attach no value to distinctions.

One of the honours that he most appreciated was his appointment, thanks to his friendship with the late Lord Birkenhead, as unofficial portrait painter-in-ordinary to the Benchers of Gray's Inn, for whom he painted the portraits of Tim Healy, whom he loved, and Lord Merrivale.

His very beautiful studio in The Boltons was one of the real joys of his life. He said in an interview in 1923: "Environment, according to whether it is pleasant or unpleasant, helps or hinders us from doing our utmost.

"Pleasant environment has the same tonic effect as good food and clean air. I am sure that staffs work better in bright offices and in smart, well-ordered factories.

"I am also sure that drab, inartistic homes have a bad effect on the national spirit at the time when it needs to be more optimistic, resourceful, and energetic than ever.



1927

MASTER DANFORTH

Love of the Beautiful

"We are more artistic in our fashions than we were. In a measure our homes are better dressed than during Queen Victoria's reign. We have hidden or destroyed our antimacassars; we have taken down our plush mantel-pieces and the old tambourines that, tied with ribbons, used to hang on the walls of most of our homes.

"Some of those legions of inartistic ornaments that used to cover every piece of flat-topped furniture have been given to the dustman. Much of the old uncomfortable Victorian furniture has gone to its proper place—the kitchen grate.

"But we have only just begun to live in bright, congenial conditions. Many of our homes are still dull and uninspiring. Our streets are dull enough. Where, then, is a man to get his encouragement to more productive effort if not in his home?

"A few days ago I was in the home of a wealthy person who would never have committed the new-rich crime of being over-dressed. Yet the home was over-dressed."

When Orpen first came to London, his studio was a cellar in Fitzroy Square. In his last years, his studio was a Palace of Beauty. The peculiar distinction of his career as an artist, as Konody has made clear, was that his earliest work has amazing maturity and it is true to say that to a large extent, Orpen the boy fresh from Ireland, had little to learn from Orpen the R.A. and K.B.E. The beauty of the workshop did not affect the cunning of the worker. But it satisfied his love of the beautiful and helped, I think, to dispel the nightmare recollections of the war. It is the most surprising phenomenon of the times that so many men, who fought in the war and lived through it, have to so large an extent forgotten all about it. But the man, who painted the "Unknown Soldier" and wrote *An Onlooker in France* could never quite forget.

His love of the beautiful and the appropriate, caused Orpen to agitate for a fuller enjoyment of the London Squares. He urged that the railings should be pulled down, because they shut out the many and, incidentally, took away to a large extent from the beauty of the open spaces. But the railings remain and, probably, will continue to remain until they are forcibly pulled down, as happened on a famous occasion in Hyde Park.

Holidays at Dieppe

Orpen painted two delicious little portraits of the King and Queen for the Queen's Dolls' House. I have noticed before that it was the essence of the man to do as perfectly as he could every job to which he put his hand and which interested him. I do not think he bothered much about comparison with his fellows or yearned to be acclaimed pre-eminent. His real urge was to satisfy himself. He had to work up to his own high standard, and the consequence can be seen in the Queen's Dolls' House, in which his portraits have been quite accurately described by a very great lady as "miraculously clever."

For some years after the war Orpen regularly had his summer holidays at Dieppe, spending his days playing tennis and his evenings in the Casino, where he made sketches of the types (and where is there such a mixed bag as in a French casino?) which both interested him and repelled him. Orpen never gambled, and it was suggested that his constant attendance near the tables would result in a portrait study of a croupier as a complement to his portrait of a *chef*. I doubt whether he ever played cards. He went to the races sometimes in Paris, but he rarely had a bet. At one time he played backgammon, and he used frequently to play billiards. When he was in London his Saturday afternoons were sometimes spent at a theatre or a cinema. But, as I recall him, it is clear in my mind how very little he was interested in the usual by-products of a man's life.

Finale

I COME TO THE LAST PHASE WITH HESITATION AND sorrow. Orpen never really recovered from his severe illness in Amiens at the end of 1918. The illness had many recurrences. As a matter of fact, he was more concerned for his health than most men are. He was fond of telling the number of hours' sleep that he required. He took a considerable amount of exercise. At one time he used to smoke as many as fifty cigarettes a day, but, when the inevitable happened, he had sufficient strength of mind, rare with men who have acquired the habit of the excessive smoking of "gaspers," to cut the daily consumption to a reasonable figure. But he had run himself too hard. He was worn out at fifty.

It was clear at least two years before he died that he had lost his zest for living. He gave up playing billiards. We saw him less frequently. He cut down his lunch-times. Work only remained to him. The Orpen whom we loved was gradually wilting away.

I do not wish to attach any falsely exaggerated importance to any incident in Orpen's life, but there is surely something vastly significant in the fact that among his last work, was the much discussed and criticized "Palm Sunday" picture, exhibited in the Royal Academy in 1931. It may be a mannered picture. It may be a bad picture. It may be the work of a master craftsman, whose hand had lost something of its cunning. But to describe it, as I have seen it described, as blasphemous is absurd. May it not fairly be regarded as the last chapter of the autobiography—the finale to the "Unknown Soldier," "Man versus Beast" and the "Black Cap"? In the "Unknown Soldier" there is a gleam of hope. Cherubim hover over the heads

"Palm Sunday"

of the gaunt skeleton sentries. But gloom is complete in "Man versus Beast" and "The Black Cap." There was mud in the war years and death and suffering and maddening stupidity. But there was also a gay-hearted courage. In the post-war years Orpen saw little but folly and cruelty and a gaudily-decorated machine for hurting and maiming.

Then, at the end, there appears on his canvas, painted with no meretricious trappings, the Figure, who rode into Jerusalem on the first Palm Sunday, and who, whatever one's beliefs may be, stands for hope and the assurance of rest when the day is done.

Life is the Quest of the Holy Grail. For most of us, the Quest is very intermittent and unenthusiastic, for most of us do not live enthusiastically, and some of us do not live at all. But Orpen lived fiercely, and searched persistently. And the Quest broke him while he was still young.

It has been a good thing in one's life to have known Orpen, one of the things for which his friends are devoutly thankful. And can any man have a better epitaph?

As I am finishing this memoir and thinking of Orpen, as I knew him, there have come to my mind two things said by native Africans after the death of Bishop Frank Weston. One was :

"Many loved him and rejoiced in him, for he was an hospitable man and generous, a helper to every one who came to him in need."

And the other, said by a child :

"You will know that he is a loving man for his mouth is always opened ready for laughter, and he is still laughing, and he will laugh for ever."

Both these things can be said of Orpen, even though he often laughed to laugh it off.

PLATE XXVI

1930

PALM SUNDAY



A FOOTNOTE

By Lord Riddell of Walton Heath

ORPEN WAS A DELIGHTFUL PERSON—ALWAYS FULL OF fun and amusing sayings. As a letter-writer I have never known his equal. It seemed impossible for him to write a dull letter. He never failed, even on the most trifling occasion, to be sparkling, witty and original. The great charm of his correspondence was, of course, the graphic little sketches by which it was profusely adorned. But even without the sketches, his letters were admirable examples of what private letters should be. They were spontaneous, informal and invariably written to please and amuse the recipient. Unfortunately, few of Orpen's letters to me can be published, as they contain allusions to persons still living, but these three will give some idea of his facetious style.

11.3.19.

SIR GEORGE RIDDELL.

SIR,

I have searched for you all morning.

I am now informed you will not be here this afternoon.

I am truly depressed.

It is all very sad.

I am free to paint you to-morrow morning from 10 a.m. onwards.

If you receive this to-day please ring up Central 0889 and tell them to let me know. To-morrow afternoon is impossible for

Yours,

· OLD BILL.

A Footnote by Lord Riddell

OFFICER OF THE LÉGION D'HONNEUR.

Congratulations once more.

You said something about dining to-night to me.

Jackson says something about dining to-night.

I'm a bit mixed.

Can you dine with me at the Majestic to-morrow night, please.

Yours ever,

LITTLE BILL.

28th July, 1919.

MY DEAR SIR GEORGE,

Can you help me?

These French Blighters won't sit—I wait and wait for them.

Could you get an official request put through to them?

All the other nations have sat readily enough. I have arranged for Pershing next week. The people wanted are Clemenceau, Pichon, Tardieu, Dutasta and Arnavon.

Please help me if you can. I am small and very weak.

My love to you.

I never thanked you for the Robey book but do so now heartily,

ORPS.

I wrote to him saying I had heard that in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles, where the Peace was signed, Sir William Orpen might be seen every day, hard at work painting his great picture of the event, and that as there had been no fire in the room for two hundred years, during the recent inclement weather the artist was nearly frozen to death, and had to be thawed by the application of hot water bottles.

He sent my letter back with the following addition:

"As Sir William returns to this work on the 28th inst., and the weather shows no sign of changing, anyone who would like to help keep him warm will please forward Hot Water Bottles.

My love,

ORPS."



my dear friends - In case I have not the pleasure of seeing
you tomorrow to thank you for the most excellent lunch - I'm
sorry about the above drawing the ink has covered your face
or something - I hope you have a good journey back - I
have written to Dusk about the photographs.
with love o/p.s.

9th November 1920 Paris.

PLATE XXVII

AN ILLUSTRATED LETTER TO LORD RIDDELL

A Footnote by Lord Riddell

In conversation Orpen did not display the same fluency as when armed with the pen. In company he usually took a back seat and said very little, unless the subject in hand aroused his feelings. Then he could be voluble enough. But I always thought he had difficulty in finding the word he was seeking. Other people do not agree with me, so perhaps I am wrong, but that is the impression he gave me. One of the subjects on which he felt most strongly was the part played by the private soldiers, dead and living, in winning the war. He continually referred to it and once said, "I worship the little white crosses and those who are left."

Despite his artistic temperament, he was a devout adherent to the precepts of the late lamented Dr. Smiles. Work was his passion and his industry untiring. He was very punctual, prompt in answering letters, precise in making contracts and meticulous in keeping accounts.

During the Peace Conference, Orpen's studio and the room in which I met the newspaper correspondents twice daily, were in the same building. Now and then he would look in and make rapid sketches of those present. At first, few of the journalists recognized him. The trim-looking little man, clad in khaki, bore no resemblance to the popular conception of an artist. Whether he preserved the sketches, I don't know. If he did, they will form an interesting record of the leading journalists who attended the Conference. Sometimes I repaid his visits and had a chat with the person he happened to be painting. On one occasion my presence had dire results. The sitter was President Wilson, who had been captured after many delays. I asked him how he had developed his concise style. This led to an animated account of the process, which so much occupied Orpen and the President that the sitting was wasted, much to Orpen's annoyance. After Wilson had departed he said, "Why, oh why, did you rob poor little Orps of his prey?"

He had a curious way of speaking of himself in the third person. He would say, for instance, "Little Orps is busy" or "Little Orps is tired" or "They would not let little Orps into the room," etc. But behind these childish ways was a keen, vigorous intelligence and an almost terrifying

A Footnote by Lord Riddell

power of accurate observation. No detail escaped his penetrating blue eyes. I once asked him whether a successful portrait painter must be a good judge of character. He said, "No, the skilful painter, with his keen powers of observation, selects a characteristic aspect of the sitter. He sees him from the outside. He depicts what could be seen by all if they had the eyes to see it. He does not conjure up an idea of the sitter's character and then try to paint a face to match it."

Like all great artists, Orpen painted what he saw. No consideration of personal interest diverted him from the truth. He was most kindly and affectionate but had a ruthless strain and nothing could prevent him from giving play to the satire which was one of his chief qualities.

PART II
THE ARTIST

By
P. G. Konody

8, SOUTH BOLTON GARDENS,

S.W.

3017 WESTERN

15 Feb 1981.

My dear Kenneth: it was a quiet night and thank you very
much for it - I'm having a grand time to day keeping my
feet warm. Hope you
get some sleep

Love you
William & Phyllis.



Youthful Genius & Success

IN AN ADDRESS TO HIS STUDENTS AT THE SYDNEY ART School, George W. Lambert, Australia's most distinguished painter, paid this striking tribute to his fellow-Academician, Sir William Orpen: "The Slade School has equipped three or four brilliant young men, Orpen amongst them. Orpen did that style of work which you students here, if you saw it in the raw, would dislike at once. You would say that it is not artistic, it is too mechanical. But let me tell you that I have found that this mechanical efficiency has its advantages; that this mind can turn its machinery on to any subject placed before it. Orpen draws with just the same accuracy a turnip, a horse, or a complicated arrangement of figures. . . . He is a very methodical, business-like Irishman, despising the word 'art,' and having no use for the word 'genius.'"

Here, in a shrewd summing-up of Orpen's unrivalled efficiency as a draughtsman and of his attitude towards Art with a capital A, is to be found the explanation of his whole brilliant career. Of education in the ordinarily accepted sense of the word he had practically none. As a boy of thirteen he entered the Dublin Municipal School of Art; and from that moment drawing became his goal, his passion, almost his language. His whole eloquence lay in the sure hand that guided his pencil. He learnt little or nothing from books. Even his extensive knowledge of art history, of the evolution of style through the ages, was acquired entirely through his penetrating eye and his unfaltering hand. Instead of studying and memorizing the printed page, he drew. So much had drawing become his language that, in spite of the great literary ability to which his books and poems testify—my friend, Sidney

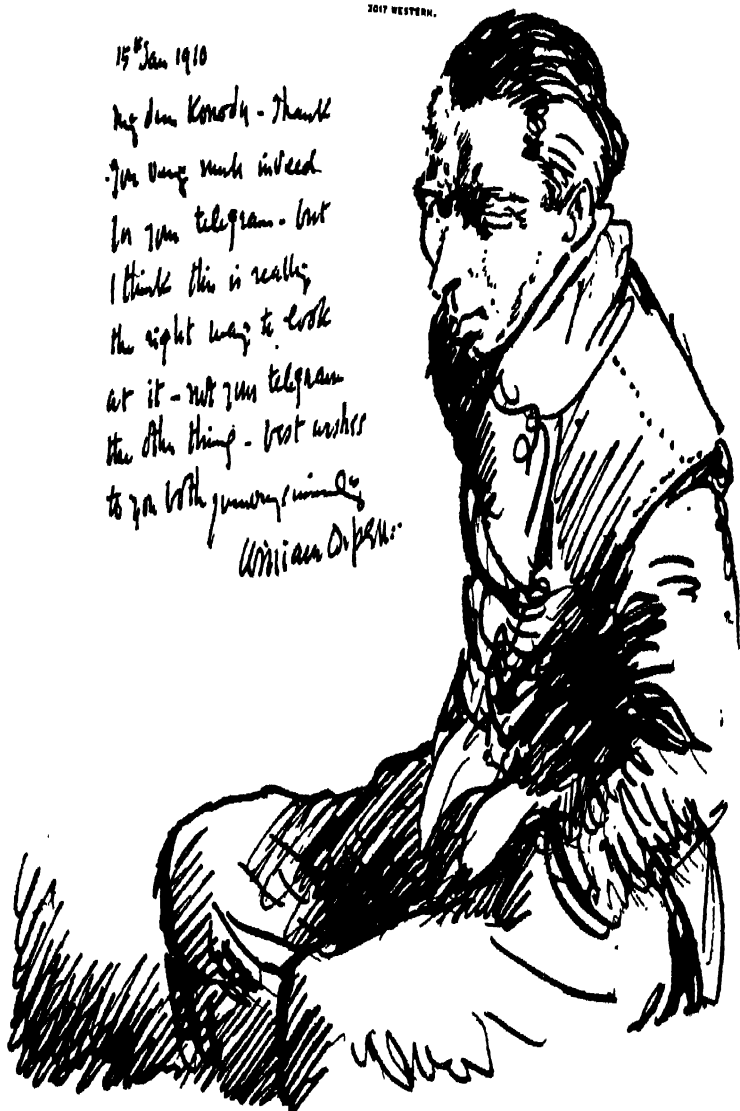
2. SOUTH BOLTON GARDENS,

S.W.

2017 WESTERN.

15th Jan 1910

My dear Kennedy - Thank
you very much indeed
for your telegram - but
I think this is really
the right way to look
at it - not your telegram
the other thing - but wishes
to go both journey & money
William Orpen.



Dark, has dealt fully with this point—later in life he decorated his correspondence with sketches expressing his meaning more clearly and tersely than any verbal explanation or description, the actual writing being confined to a few words. I reproduce two of these illustrated letters. The first, written after a hectic night at a Covent Garden fancy-dress ball, shows him “having a grand time to-day, keeping my feet warm.” The swathed head, the tub and the medicine bottles tell their own tale. The other, a reply to a telegram congratulating him on his election to the Associateship of the Royal Academy, is equally laconic: “I think this is really the right way to look at it—not your telegram, the other thing”—“this” being a reference to the amused wink of his left eye, far more expressive, and less compromising, than any verbal explanation.

He drew anything that came to his notice, not only in nature, but in the museums of his native Dublin and of London. Not even his intimates in later life had the remotest notion of the profound artistic culture which he had stored up whilst still in his 'teens. His conversation gave no clue to it. Neither did the straightforward realism of his professional work, which was exclusively concerned with the life of the visible world in which he moved. But the carefully preserved sketch-books of his Slade and pre-Slade days testify to the assiduousness and determination with which he set out to master the elements of style of all periods and races. Assyrian reliefs, Egyptian furniture, the classic Greek orders of architecture, Roman mosaics, Byzantine enamels, Persian glass, mediæval French ivories, Jacobean wood-carving, Gothic fan-vaulting, Renaissance jewels, furniture, metalwork, bookbindings, weapons, every conceivable object of artistic craftsmanship, Western and Eastern, are to be found in these exercise books, set down not only with infallible accuracy, but with a deftness of touch and with a taste in the selection of accents and labour-saving omission of non-essentials that suggest a mature master's hand.

Unfortunately the sketch-books are undated, with the exception of a solitary page on which is a blackberry branch with inimitable delicacy of line and sensitive accentuation. It bears the date October 25th, 1895, and thus stands as

proof that, so far as drawing was concerned, Orpen had nothing to learn at the age of seventeen. Albrecht Dürer himself could not have surpassed the perfection of that page with the blackberry branch.

Orpen's life drawings, even before he had entered the Slade School to continue his studies under the stimulating guidance of Professor Henry Tonks, showed the same perfection, not only as regards anatomical correctness, but also in the functional use of a swelling and diminishing line—in that feeling of "lost and found" by which alone it is possible to convey the sense of the plastic life contained within the area circumscribed by the contour. At the age of seventeen he was a stylish draughtsman; but style came to him naturally, without conscious striving. He drew like Michelangelo, and Rubens, and Watteau, not because he tried to display his cleverness by imitating the old masters' stylish calligraphy, but because he felt form as the old masters felt it.

Small wonder then that the life drawing which won him the unanimous vote for the gold medal in the National Competition open to students of all the art schools under the Board of Education, caused a veritable sensation when exhibited with the other students' work at South Kensington. It seemed incredible that so young a student should have arrived at such maturity of artistic expression—should have produced a drawing combining flawless technical perfection with a rare suggestion of throbbing, pulsing life. Small wonder, too, that from the moment the rather wild-looking, rather shy and uncouth, carelessly-dressed, whimsically humorous youth from Dublin crossed the threshold of the Slade School, he was immediately placed on a pedestal by his fellow-students.

An account of young Orpen's position at the Slade School, given by one of these fellow-students, was published in August 1901 in *The Artist* by Wilfrid Meynell, to whom credit is due for having been first to recognize the young artist's genius, not only by public expression in print, but by practical support—support which, by the way, must have carried its own reward, since the handing over of a cheque for £60, welcome as it was to the painter at the beginning of his career, made Meynell the possessor of four



PLATE XXVIII

1899
HAMLET

Orpen paintings (including the seated portrait of Augustus John) and a number of drawings.

"When I was at the Slade," said Meynell's informant, "it was a one-man show; that man was Orpen. He had all the *talents de société* of an art school; and certainly he was a leader of art students. We allowed much to the fact that he was a thoroughly hard worker; hard workers all, therefore, we had to be—except, perhaps, when we left our work and gathered round Orpen's easel to watch his extraordinary pencil in action. Sometimes it was thought the tall figure of a professor peered through the smoke of many cigarettes, at this student, a real student, who dignified the name for all of us. Many stories, too, were current among us as to the lively bidding made in the Professor's room for the drawings Orpen produced while with us. . . . He now and then left us—once in 1898, to enjoy himself for a day or two at his beloved Louvre, and for us these would be despondent days. Disputes as to the posing of the model would waste our time, and confusion would reign in our minds as to the colours fit to be put out upon our palettes. We would bless the day which brought back Orpen; he, with a nod, would pose our model, while a frown from him cleaned our palettes."

Continual practice of drawing, in leisure as well as in school hours, as may be gathered from the numerous portrait sketches of his friends, which alternate with the life studies in his sketch-books, sharpened Orpen's power of observation and gave sureness and authority to his hand. Assiduous study of the old masters taught him how to make best use of his unrivalled skill of hand. In Dublin already he had copied Van Dyck's "San Sebastian," and we have been told by his fellow-student how he revelled in communing with, and appropriating, the treasures of the Louvre—for *seeing* meant *absorbing* for young Orpen. In London he spent many hours at the National Gallery, the British Museum Print Room, and the Soane Museum, where Rembrandt, Goya and Hogarth respectively were the shrines at which he worshipped for preference.

The astounding "historical summer composition" of the play scene in *Hamlet*, which gained him the £40 Slade prize in 1899, may be regarded as an undisguised avowal

“The Barrel Organ”

of the sources from which he took nourishment. It is an amalgam of elements derived from Rembrandt and Hogarth, Watteau and Fragonard, Goya and Rowlandson; but these various elements do not assume the form of fragmentary plagiarisms: they are welded into completely satisfying unity, held together by the logic of dramatically-disposed light and shade and by the golden glow of circumambient atmosphere, and spiced by irony and whimsical humour which defied all the conventional bombast of the historical subject and almost made of it an irresponsible carnival scene. The play itself could not have been treated in this spirit without objectionable irreverence. And so Orpen introduced the stage but as an incident in a more extensive composition which dealt with a rehearsal of *Hamlet* at the Old Sadler's Wells Theatre in Islington, the main subject being the antics of the protagonists in the auditorium of the theatre. The picture, for which he was awarded the £40 prize, hung for some time at the Slade School, and was, about 1917, sold to Lady Cholmondeley for £1200. It reappeared, after the artist's death, at the Royal Academy in 1932, when this work of a youth who had barely come of age reduced the mature efforts of most artists of a later generation to dull insignificance.

Only once, a few years later, did Orpen revert to the compositional manner of his “Hamlet”: “The Barrel Organ” or “The Organ Grinder,” which now hangs at the Savile Club, contains figures inspired by Goya, Teniers, Ostade, Daumier and others, whilst Rembrandt serves as authority for the arbitrary light which does not seem to spring from any natural or artificial outside source, but to emanate from the figures themselves in the centre of the canvas. The picture is a droll, capricious fantasy, full of animation and whimsical conceits, but is not as completely satisfactory in organization as the “Hamlet,” perhaps because the artist found the intimate setting of the theatre interior more congenial than the vaster stage of a hilly landscape—perhaps, too, because, unless I am much mistaken, the “Barrel Organ” is not the result of a concentrated sustained effort, its execution extending over several years. The picture was exhibited in the autumn of 1904 at the New English Art Club under the title of

PLATE XXIX

1900

THE MIRROR



"The Mirror"

"An Improvisation on the Organ," but though the picture was not completed before that year, its beginning must date back to about the "Hamlet" period. The self-portrait introduced in the group on the left shows Orpen as he was in his Slade days, and justifies the conclusion that "The Organ Grinder" was begun not later than 1900.

The "Hamlet" had established Orpen's reputation as a painter among the Slade students and his personal circle. In the spring of the following year, 1900, he made his public debut at the New English Art Club with a portrait of Augustus John which, in the disposition of the design on the square canvas, even to the wide-brimmed felt hat balanced by the sitter on his knee, in the sobriety of the colour scheme and the appreciation of tone values, follows almost anxiously the example set by Whistler's "Carlyle." It was probably the very frankness of his borrowing that stayed the critics from according him on his first appearance the hearty welcome which would have been justified by the sterling qualities of expressive drawing, searching observation, and purposeful handling of paint.

It was the appearance of "The Mirror"—now in the Tate Gallery—at the New English Art Club autumn exhibition of the same year that made the young artist the talk of London and placed his reputation on a solid, unassailable basis. In the midst of the loosely handled, sometimes sloppy, Impressionist experiments which were then encouraged by the New English Art Club, almost to the exclusion of anything that savoured of academic probity, this young painter dared to defy the prevailing fashion with a picture that seemed reactionary in its meticulously careful handling and loving attention to detail. Into the rebellious atmosphere of the New English Art Club he had introduced a picture that would have gained whole-hearted applause from an Academy jury. Painted with the minute precision of a Terborch or a Metsu, the picture is anything but tight in handling. There is no hardness of contour; neither is there any indecision. The light of day, filtering into this interior, caresses the forms, liquefies the shadows, gives the contours the quality that in the working of a perfectly constructed machine is

The "Cany" Landscape

known as "dither."¹ The convex mirror, with the reflection showing the artist at the easel, with a woman looking over his shoulder, and all the furnishings of the studio, is as perfect in its more modern way as the mirror in Jan Van Eyck's Arnalfini group.

Together with the "Mirror" was shown a portrait of "Herbert Everett, Esq.," dominated, like the "Augustus John," by Whistler's "Carlyle," and a boldly handled landscape, painted at Cany, in Normandy, where Orpen found, during a summer holiday, many subjects congenial to his then pronouncedly romantic spirit. This romantic tendency is very much in evidence in the very early group of the three Slade School musketeers of the brush—Orpen himself, John and Albert Rutherston—in conference at a corner of "The Old Circus" (Piccadilly Circus), perhaps deliberating which direction to take for what used to be known in Slade students' argot as the "pub crawl." This "historic document" is now in the possession of Miss Marie Sterner, New Jersey, U.S.A. In the quiet streets and courtyards of Cany, with their sloping roofs, dormer windows and wooden outside stairs, Orpen discovered themes of strangely dramatic intensity. It is extremely unlikely that he was in the least influenced by James Pryde's thrilling interpretation of kindred architectural subjects, but there is an undeniable similarity in the younger artist's romantic visualization and in his dramatic use of light and shade.

Only occasionally in later years, when released from the exacting demands of the sitters who passed in ceaseless succession through the idolized portrait painter's studio, did Orpen revert to this mood of romantic realism. "The Empty Bed" shown at the Royal Academy in 1932, after the artist's death, though depicting a bedroom in Mrs. St. George's house, is conceived in the same mood as "The Bed, Cany," of 1901. It again recalls the art of James Pryde by the air of mystery which charges a simple subject with dramatic tension. "The Knacker's Yard," painted in 1910, is perhaps the most notable instance of the imaginative, mystical side of Orpen's outlook. The casual

¹ I have borrowed this happy simile from Harold Speed's *The Practice and Science of Drawing* (Seeley, Service & Co., 1913).

PLATE XXX

1900

A MERE FRACTURE



Portraits & Relaxations

ALREADY AT THE BEGINNING OF HIS INDEPENDENT professional career, Orpen's qualifications as a portrait painter were recognized by a few shrewd judges who had the courage to back their faith in his future by entrusting him with commissions. The portraits of J. Staats Forbes, the famous collector of Barbizon School pictures, which was acquired in 1926 by the Manchester Gallery, and the group of the Swinton Family, Orpen's first "Conversation piece," date back to the first year of the century. But the most significant phase of his art in those early years was his interest in the *genre* picture. He challenged the contemptuous attitude of the superior folk towards the "picture with a story," when he exhibited, at the New English Art Club, the stronghold of English impressionism, first "A Mere Fracture," then "The Valuers," the "Window Picture" and "The Chess Players."

"A Mere Fracture" in particular invited comparison with the work of such Victorian anecdotal painters as Mulready, Webster and Frith. But, like Hogarth in his didactic mood, Orpen commanded admiration in spite, and not because of, his subjects. He remained above all a painter. Pictorial quality was not sacrificed to sentimental or anecdotal interest. His perfect adjustment of tone values, his mastery in the rendering of indoor light, had something of the perfection of the inimitable Vermeer. Exquisite colour harmonization, in which the more definite notes of the green wall, the red dressing gown, the light blue towel, and the surgeon's red-gold hair sing out from the neutral tones of the shadow passages, is here combined with such perfect draughtsmanship as is to be found in the



PLATE XXXI

1901

MRS. EVERETT ON THE ISLAND OF PATMOS



PLATE XXXII

1925

MAN VERSUS BEAST

Satire Tempered with Pity

surgeon's sensitive fingers trying to locate the exact position of the fracture and the extent of the injury. Admirable, too, is the intentness with which the surgeon applies himself to his task, and the varying degrees of anxious interest displayed by the other protagonists in the little drama.

Every line of the design, the strictly geometrical basis of which is concealed with the rarest ingenuity, directs attention to the centre of interest, the surgeon's head and hands, whence start the converging lines of two pyramids with their apexes indicated respectively by the heads of the woman on the left and the man with his arm on the mantel on the right. From these two heads the eye is attracted across the blank space of the wall to the crest of the circular mirror, the apex of yet another crowning pyramid.

A certain degree of literary, anecdotal interest is attached to another picture of 1901, if only because of its intriguing title: "Mrs. Everett on the Island of Patmos." I have no knowledge of the identity of the lady immortalized in this painting, or of her connection with the classic soil of Patmos. Neither can I offer any suggestion as regards the symbolic significance of a rainbow and a dove that figure in the picture which, with all its serious, solid thoroughness of execution, seems to be conceived in a humorous spirit—as a parody, perhaps, of the stagey posturing of certain full length portraits by Reynolds and his contemporaries. Perhaps "Ariadne at Naxos" was in Orpen's mind when he christened the picture; but, with his keen Irish sense of humour he must have realized—and relished—the incongruity between the anything but heroic Belcher type and suburban domestic attire of his heroine and her dramatic gesture; the clash between the sound of her name and that of the *Ægean* isle.

Of "The Valuers," shown at the New English Art Club in 1902, I have but a vague recollection beyond a general impression of its technical and spiritual kinship with Daumier's art. A reference to the picture in James Laver's "Portraits in Oil and Vinegar" bears out this impression. He speaks of an added "something which it is no longer the fashion to call, with Matthew Arnold,

"Man versus Beast"

'a criticism of life.' It is an irony without bitterness, satire tempered with pity. Orpen makes Sickert's subtlety seem merely cold-blooded, for his is the sympathy which shares and does not merely contemplate. He is on the stage, acting too, rather than in the stalls, ever so slightly bored with the foolish play. 'The Wild Beast,' with its presentment of fierce man and spiritless captive animal, is the painting which, perhaps, exemplifies this quality most completely."

Many times, at intervals of years, with his pen as well as with his brush, has Orpen given utterance to this sympathy with the captive beast, with suffering man. And always has his satire a foundation of pity, even when the object of his pity happens to be a criminal of the deepest dye. It is the keynote as well of his written account of the French Bluebeard Landru's trial, as of his painting entitled "*Man versus Beast*" at the Royal Academy of 1925; of many of his macabre war pictures as well as of his much discussed and misunderstood memorial "*To the Unknown British Soldier in France*."

Of Landru's trial he wrote: "Here was a gathering of gaping, insolent, rotten people, out to see a man with the great knife near his throat, all gabbling, pushing and crushing each other to catch a glimpse of him, the whole congregation swaying about and chattering like monkeys, and he appeared before them calm, with a tolerant smile—all his movements had charm and dignity. . . . The audience, the warders, the advocates, the jurors and the president all appeared a common herd beside him. Their movements were coarse, their smiles vulgar, their gestures overdone."

In "*Man v. Beast*" he depicts a booth at a French fair, where, on the trainer's invitation, members of the audience are invited to match their strength against a Polar bear who has already defeated one of their number. All the artist's sympathy is with the beast—a dignified and noble creature in comparison with the besotted, degraded, debauched audience, the only respectable member of which is a monkey seated on a chair in the centre. Perhaps this exalting of the monkey above the human beings was a tribute to the memory of "*Jenny*." Jenny was one of the



PLATE XXXIII

1906

THE ENGLISH NUDE



PLATE XXXIV

1905

THE WASHHOUSE

romances of Orpen's life and ought therefore to be dealt with by my friend, Sidney Dark. But I have no scruples to poach on his preserves, since he has trespassed on my ground by writing so fully and adequately about Orpen as a portrait painter.

Jenny, then—I believe that was her name—was a female chimpanzee at the Dublin Zoo. And Jenny had fallen violently in love with Orpen who never failed to visit her when his teaching duties at the Dublin School of Art took him to his native town. Jenny's keeper was in the secret and allowed his charge out of the monkey cage when her distinguished visitor arrived. I have seen Jenny hugging and kissing her friend with truly human passion, whilst her partner, a fierce male chimpanzee, shook the bars of the cage in the uncontrollable fury of jealousy and had to be driven back by the keeper with a wooden pole. It is no exaggeration to say that Jenny had conceived a real passion for Orpen, and that Orpen was as touched by her marks of affection as he was amused by her almost human conduct.

But to return now to his satire "*Man v. Beast*"—it belongs, like the war pictures which will have to be considered at greater length in due course, to a much later period of Orpen's artistic evolution—a period when he had definitely abandoned the painstaking, detailed realism of his "small master" phase for a looser, more summary, and often more mannered handling; when he was no longer concerned with the registration of subtle values, but with the striking effects of broadly planned, emphatic colour patterns. One of the most perfect examples of his early realistic manner was "*Waiting their Cue*" (New English Art Club, 1904). The simple subject—two amateur actors, or perhaps professional barn-stormers, behind the scene of an improvised theatre—is treated with dignity and infinite pictorial charm. Soft light is diffused over the barn-like interior, in which the two little figures seem actually to live in their atmospheric ambient.

In the same year as "*The Valuers*," Orpen exhibited his first painting of the nude, or semi-nude. The innumerable life-studies in his sketch-books testify to the zest with which, as a student, he had devoted himself to the task of mastering the language of the human form, in action and in repose.

The Influence of Ribera

"The Rebel," like all his paintings of the nude, is eloquent of the intense enjoyment he derived from this mastery. He revelled in the exercise of his skill, in evoking life out of a dead surface. Every stroke of the brush has its definite, expressive function in the modelling of bony and fleshy forms, in the building up of the muscular mechanism. The romantic title is merely a cloak for a scholarly, accomplished study of a male torso. A rifle on the ground by the side of the corpse is introduced as a concession to the requirements of pictorial story-telling—a perfectly legitimate and acceptable means of investing the subject with additional interest, so long as the literary significance does not interfere with the working out of the purely pictorial problem. In this case, as always with Orpen, in his early maturity, the controlling force is the painter's instinct for straightforward realism, quality of pigment, and expressive brushwork. His leaning towards the romantic was always tempered by realism. To use J. B. Manson's happy phrase: "He hitched his waggon to a star, but one end was securely tied to earth."

Conceived in the same spirit as "The Rebel" are the two versions of "Job," one of which is in the Johannesburg Municipal Gallery and the other at the Savile Club. The emaciated figure recalls Ribera's suffering saints and tortured martyrs. Ribera provides the example for the dramatic contrasts of deep shadows and strong lights which help to accentuate the muscular protuberances, and for the very manipulation of the brush—the dragging of the shadow edges into the areas of light.

With all their masterly sureness of execution, and with all the thought given to the adaptation of the nude figure to the exigencies of the subject picture, these paintings, owing to the anxious attention paid to the correct rendering of the model's anatomy, still hold a suggestion of the exceptionally competent art school study rather than of mature artistic creation.

In the picture which Orpen for some inexplicable reason christened "The English Nude" (of unrecorded date, but, on stylistic evidence, painted in the early years of the century), the artist has rid himself of all timidity. He is no longer the slave but the master of his model. It is a very

PLATE XXXV

1906

A WOMAN



An Æsthetic Relaxation

un-English nude, a woman of opulent form, making up by robust health for her undeniable lack of feminine charm—a woman who might be of Hendrickje Stoffels's breed—who is here depicted seated on a curtained bed, with one leg drawn up, the other on the floor. There can be no doubt that the artist was fully conscious of the striking similarity, in physiognomy as well as in physical development, between his model and Rembrandt's mistress. It was presumably his recognition of the analogy that made him adopt Rembrandt's palette and Rembrandt's very handling for this picture—adopt it with an astounding ease and with an understanding of Rembrandt's art that was not satisfied with superficial imitation, but probed the depths of the master's vision.

In later years, when Orpen was established as a fashionable portrait painter with a long waiting list of importunate patrons—when the conditions of mass production forced him almost to abandon artistic experiments and to turn out the clichés that his sitters expected from him and admired because their expectation was never disappointed (nor was even his most mannered and mechanical production ever unworthy of admiration)—in these later years he repeatedly turned to the nude for recreation and self-expression, for relief from the exacting business of portrait painting, just as Sargent found relief in his holiday work in the Tyrolean mountains, on the Venetian lagoons, on the Ligurian coast and in the old-world cities of Spain. Upon the painting of the nude was spent most of Orpen's æsthetic curiosity and experimental energy. These pictures were painted in spurts of creative enthusiasm, without restraint, without consideration of their eventual destination, without desire to please anybody but the artist himself. And each time they were approached with a fresh eye, treated in a different way, attacking a different problem of lighting, of manipulation, of colour organization. They were a labour of love; and Orpen hated to part with them. Many of them were in his studio at the time of his death.

In "The Eastern Gown"—exhibited at the New English Art Club in 1906—the model, wearing a garment something like the long-hooded burnous of an Arab, turns her

back to the spectator, but her form is revealed in the liquid depths of a reflecting mirror, with all the subtle modifications of colour and tone that distinguish the mirrored echo from tangible corporeality.

To the same year belongs the superb painting of "A Woman" lying face downwards on her bed, in an attitude of complete abandon, her long hair loose, and the white bedclothes in a crumpled heap behind. Drawing and modelling are as superb as the painting of the white sheets and the suggestion of the pressure of the slender, gracefully immature body on the mattress. A life-size version of this subject, painted in 1910, was acquired by a Japanese millionaire collector, the Marquis Matsukata, for a museum of European art which he intended to establish in Kioto.

"A Woman" was a triumph of realistic painting and marks, with "The Washhouse" of the same year, the climax of a line of development which made for absolute truth in the rendering of tone values. In his first phase Orpen had been mainly inspired by Rembrandt. "The Washhouse" indicates a transfer of his allegiance to Velazquez. Velazquez, at least, is recalled by the silvery quality of its greys and whites, the wonderful play of light over every surface, and, above all, by the painting of the silhouette of the woman's face against the light background—a silhouette that is at once firm and soft, that is not blurred or dragged into the background, and yet has no hardness.

At this time Orpen had already achieved success and fame as a portrait painter and was, apart from other commissions, engaged upon the series of portraits of eminent Irishmen which have their permanent home at the Dublin Municipal Gallery. Strong in characterization, admirable as likenesses, competent in craftsmanship, straightforward in statement, these portraits of his famous compatriots fulfil their function as reliable documents, but are wholly lacking in æsthetic significance. In them, for the first time, Orpen assumes the attitude of the honest, reliable worker out to do the job that is expected from him—the job of producing a good likeness without asserting his own personality or subordinating representation to abstract pictorial organization. They follow an effective

PLATE XXXVI

1913

SOWING THE SEED

The Conscientious Craftsman

recipe, the chief ingredient of which is a strong accentuation of high lights which gives the faces a somewhat perspiring look. They are uninteresting as works of art, and may be said to represent the lowest ebb of Orpen's artistic achievement, but even so their integrity of craftsmanship and life-like presentation of the sitters raise them far above the general level of contemporary portraits painted from a purely objective point of view. If the vision is purely photographic, the artistic handwriting reveals their maker's personality.

But for the moment we are not concerned with Orpen's prodigious activity as a portrait painter. The Dublin series are referred to merely to show the line that divides Orpen, the creative artist, from Orpen, the conscientious, honest workman. And, considered from this point of view, it is significant that the years which gave birth to such vital masterpieces as "A Woman," "The Eastern Gown," and "The Washhouse" also witnessed the production of the uninspired Dublin portraits.

Decorative Pictures, Facts & Fantasies

NOT BEFORE 1913 DID THE DEMANDS MADE UPON HIS time by his sitters allow Orpen further opportunities to explore the pictorial possibilities of the nude. Of realistic representation he had acquired full mastery. It had almost ceased to interest him. He was now turning to new fields. The nude figures of a young woman of classic proportions and two putti-like children, male and female, in the whimsical allegorical composition entitled "Sowing the Seed for the Board of Agriculture and Technical Instruction in Ireland," are no longer a demonstration of his command of the anatomical language and of his unique power of draughtsmanship. The plastic representation of the human figure by pigment, creating a three-dimensional illusion on a two-dimensional surface, has ceased to attract him as an end in itself. The figure is now made an integral part of a considered decorative design, and though the modelling is sufficiently indicated to suggest the roundness of form, it does not unduly project from the flatness of the pattern.

The use of the marble medium, adopted by Orpen for this and other decorative compositions, adds to the fresco-like effect of this painting, the allegorical meaning of which is somewhat obscure. The artist's own explanation was that he intended it to symbolize "the new Sinn Fein movement: the girl represents the spirit of Sinn Fein in 1913, sowing the seed. You see the crop springing from it while the older ones look on." Be that as it may, the beautiful quality of the painting is beyond dispute—the masterly rendering of form, consummate brushwork, admirable disposition of the design, and the limpid clearness of colour. Adorably quaint and graceful are the two



PLATE XXXVII

1916

THE HOLY WELL

“The Holy Well”

“putti,” whose little bodies are reflected in a pool in the centre of the picture. To the right of this group is a shocked philistine in black with a young female companion under a leafless tree, upon which is perched a crow that seems to be waiting only for the passing of this strange procession to pounce down upon the seed and rob young Ireland of its potential yield.

The black kill-joy philistine might well embody the spirit of a section of the Australian public who were roused to indignant protest and to an actual vitriol attack on the picture when it was placed on view as a new acquisition by the Adelaide Gallery. The picture was sent back to Orpen who found on its arrival at his studio that the charming nude figure of the sower had been completely repainted. He repaired the damage and sold the canvas eventually to Senator Elliot, of Melbourne. The Gallery commissioned in its place a portrait of Marshal Foch.

In the same mood which had inspired “Sowing the Seed,” and with the same marble medium, Orpen painted in 1916 the “Nude Pattern—Holy Well, Ireland,” a fascinating, whimsical, somewhat scattered design of men and women—some of them amusingly reminiscent of Rodin—in every stage of complete or partial *déshabille*, gathered around the miraculous spring.

These decorative compositions, with all their unconventionality and whimsical waywardness of spirit, were deliberately planned works, the result of much thought and of numerous preliminary studies. Quite a number of isolated or grouped figure studies for the “Holy Well” were acquired with the picture itself by Mrs. St. George, whilst similar drawings for “Sowing the Seed,” apart from some that passed into private collections, were kept by the artist himself who was a very good judge of his own work and refused the most tempting offers for a certain number of pictures and drawings into which he had put the best of which he was capable.

When next the nude engaged his attention, he approached it from quite a different angle. Cold-blooded picture planning does not enter into the composition of “Early Morning” and “The Disappointing Letter,” which were the sensation of the New English Art Club summer exhibi-

"The Disappointing Letter"

tion of 1922. A vision of womanhood in radiant freshness, health and beauty had been revealed to him in a flash and had compelled him to fix the transient moment on canvas to make the world share in his delight. In both these pictures there is not the slightest suggestion of the posing model. It is as though the glorious golden-haired, perfectly shaped creature had been surprised by the artist at a moment when she least expected an intruder, and had been hypnotized by him into immobility. The mood of the first moment of delighted surprise is maintained throughout the laborious process of picture-making; the artist's exuberance and excited tension suffer no abatement. They are contagious and cannot fail to affect even the puritan who might be inclined to be shocked at the Fragonard flavour of these boudoir indiscretions.

The impression left by these two pictures is thus one of sensuous appreciation of a spontaneous, intimate revelation of beauty—an irresistible impulse to create a permanent record of this vision for its own sake, without consideration of the means employed. Yet, comparison of the two pictures reveals the extent to which Orpen, even in his least reflective moments, was concerned with technical problems. In the "Disappointing Letter," the figure is firmly "drawn" and modelled with a sculptor's plastic sense. Everything is sharply defined, even to the creases in the tumbled bedclothes; and in the still life incidents, such as the silver coffee-pot and spoon and the china cup and plate, surface qualities, textures and reflections are rendered with a degree of realistic truth that makes one's fingers itch to handle the objects. In "Early Morning," on the other hand, all traces of preliminary drawing have vanished. The model's forms grow out of dazzling rays of sunlight and warm reflections from the red hangings behind the bed. Nowhere will be found a clearly defined or accentuated contour, but the forms are there, definitely set down in all their roundness and alternating softness and firmness. If the one picture is a study of plastic form, the other is a study of vibrant light caressing form and veiling its plastic values.

The same inspiring model figures in yet a third picture shown at the same exhibition—"Amiens, 1914." This

PLATE XXXIX

1922

EARLY MORNING

Portraits & Self-Portraits

time she impersonates the heroine of a war melodrama—the victim of a German soldier's brutality. Technically the picture is as accomplished as the others, but it suffers from the over-statement which in melodrama so often provokes laughter where it is intended to draw tears. There is just a possibility that the picture was conceived in the satirical mood which lends piquancy to so many of his works, as a grim parody of the type of war propaganda, to which we owed the Belgian women with lopped-off hands and mutilated breasts and the "corpse utilization factory." On the other hand, there is the evidence of his illustrated Peace Conference letters to his friend Robin Legge to show that he shared the popular view, at least, of the Kaiser as a bloodthirsty ogre capable of any deed of unspeakable horror.

After 1922 Orpen's time was almost exclusively taken up by portrait commissions. Between that date and his death in 1931 he painted over two hundred portraits, and in the rare working hours that were not claimed by his sitters he amused himself with—painting portraits of himself! Like Rembrandt he found his own features and the effect left upon them by the passing of the years a source of inexhaustible interest. No artist, save Rembrandt, has left so complete a pictorial autobiography. When, just before the end, he returned once more to the painting of the nude, he was a man broken in health, whose hand had lost its authority. The reclining figure of "Eve in the Garden of Eden," which he showed at the Royal Academy in 1931, was a tragic indication of physical and mental dissolution.

Fate had destined Orpen to become the leading portrait painter of his generation; and his fund of practical common sense made him submit to her decree and thrust aside the temptation held out by a prospect of freedom to do what the spirit moved him to do. His fame and popularity growing from year to year, the demands made upon his time by eager "clients" becoming more and more exacting, he found in later life but scant opportunities for those satirical pictorial comments on the human comedy, which really constitute his most convincing self-expression; for decorative compositions in which his sense of pattern

“ Western Wedding ”

was allowed to triumph over his natural inclination towards naturalistic representation ; and for those spontaneous, undiluted manifestations of *joie de vivre*, in which he revelled, at holiday time, on the Irish coast, happy in having escaped for the moment the irksome routine of studio work and of town life. It is of these comparatively few remaining pictures of this type that I propose to speak now, in order to clear the way for the undisturbed consideration of his activity, first as a portraitist, and finally as a war painter.

Quite isolated among these pictures, though closely allied in spirit, subject, manner of treatment and use of the marble medium to the “Nude Pattern—Holy Well, Ireland” and “Sowing the Seed,” to which reference has already been made—indeed, the three may be said to constitute a kind of Irish trilogy—stands the “Western Wedding,” exhibited at the New English Art Club in 1914, and acquired in 1918 by the Marquis Matsukata for his European museum in Kioto. The picture is apt to leave a first impression of being painted in a mood of bantering flippancy, but the very serious and exquisitely wrought studies for two groups in this picture suffice to dispel this notion and to establish the sincerity of the effort. The setting is typical of the sad, barren, stony scenery of some parts of Donegal. Tufts and patches of vegetation appear here and there, as in some backgrounds by Piero della Francesca, on the inhospitable ground from which they draw but scant nourishment. The bride and bridegroom, plain country folk, receive the robed priest’s blessing at the foot of a roadside crucifix. Behind them are the witnesses, and, further back, a corpulent farmer and a woman on a white horse, a fiddler, some children, and an old drunkard squatting on the ground among a litter of pigs. On the road, in the background, a grey motor-car strikes a somewhat incongruous note of luxury in this scene of very humble rustic life in a remote and neglected district. All this wealth of incident is put together with considerable skill, but in rather bizarre fashion, with more than a touch of caricature in the characterization of the Western types, and with probably intentional disregard of the pictorial planes, which results in a certain sense of confusion, the landscape features being, as it were, forced into the fore-

1914

WESTERN WEDDING



PLATE XLI

1926

CLOSING TIME, AVIGNON



“The Black Cap”

ground, so that the general effect of the picture is as of a flat pattern, or a Persian miniature.

Of the subject pictures painted by Orpen in post-war years, none attracted as much attention or excited as much comment as the grim satire which, under the title of “The Black Cap or The Passing of his Lordship,” figured at the Royal Academy exhibition of 1928. It depicts a senile, but pompous, old judge, on his way to the Court, where he is about to pronounce the death sentence. He is preceded by a strutting beadle and followed by an arrogant menial carrying his train, the whole grim procession being treated in a spirit of caricature. Although apparently the satire is aimed at the procedure of English law courts, the idea for it, I have been given to understand, came to Orpen as a result of the profound impression left upon him by the Landru trial, in which his sympathies were entirely with the fascinating French Bluebeard fighting against the overwhelming odds of stern justice and public odium, and maintaining throughout a dignified bearing and the charm that had allured so many of his victims. Of the Landru trial, and of the accused as he appeared in the dock, Orpen had made numerous drawings which served him as material for a painting bought in 1921 by the *Continental Daily Mail*. In quality of pigment “The Black Cap” recalls Orpen’s early small portraits in which his sitters were shown in the intimacy of their home life, surrounded by their household gods. A particularly delightful passage is the framed picture on the wall, with a gibbet figuring prominently in a classic architectural setting of the Pannini type.

“Closing Time, Avignon,” shown at Burlington House in 1926, is remarkable for the way in which the unity of an instantaneous visual impression is maintained throughout the laborious course of picture-making, far away from the scene which had fascinated the artist sufficiently to stamp itself indelibly upon his memory. Through the bars of a cage, presumably in the local zoo, is seen a woman selling balloons to the departing visitors among the green rustling trees. Within the cage are three tigers with their keeper, who, armed with a stick, is lazily reclining, as indifferent to the proximity of the dangerous beasts as though they.

"After the Ball"

were tame cats. The realism of the rendering is tempered by a pronounced feeling for decorative effect. Every touch of the brush bears witness to the gusto with which the picture is painted and denotes the work of a man for whom the technical difficulties of his craft have ceased to exist.

The fact that Orpen had found the models for his tigers in some excellent large-size photographs gave rise to many heated discussions about the legitimacy of a proceeding which has since been vindicated in most demonstrative fashion by Richard Sickert. Sickert's frank and unconditional acceptance of the accidents of a snapshot photograph, and his refusal to interfere even with its distorted perspective, which gives undue prominence to figures or objects in close proximity to the camera, have not only been accepted but admired by critics. Orpen, too, made no secret of his occasional use of photographs as a labour-saving expedient—he authorized, for instance, the publication of the photograph from a piece of Gothic sculpture, which had served him as model for the Saviour on a donkey in one of his last pictures, "Palm Sunday, A.D. 33." But he never allowed the camera to design his pictures for him, or rather he considered it the artist's duty to organize according to his æsthetic sense the material supplied by the camera. For him, who had what may be called an infallible photographic eye, it must, indeed, have been more difficult to evoke the illusion of life by copying a photographic print than by working direct from the living beast at the Zoo.

Orpen's subject picture at the Royal Academy of the following year, 1927, "*After the Ball*," is an irresponsible fantasy of such irresistible charm and rich pictorial quality as to make all objections on the ground of unintelligibility entirely irrelevant. The masked and costumed figures of the revellers seem to have stepped out of the pages of Casanova. And in stepping out, one of the figures displays a red heel where one would reasonably expect to find the toes. The spectator is left in doubt as to whether the light is the natural light of day or the artificial illumination of night; whether the scene is indoors or in the open; whether the wall is a mere screen or solid masonry. But

PLATE XLII

1927

AFTER THE BALL



1909

IN THE DUBLIN MOUNTAINS

Gipsies & the Bear



The Irish Scene

all this is of little consequence in a *capriccio* where everything is charm and grace and elegance, where the drawing is so exquisite, the colour scheme of subtle greys and whites with flashes of blue so entrancing, and the brushwork so lively and impulsive.

If an artist's work may be consulted for indications regarding the tenor of his life, the years from about 1909 to 1914 would appear to have been the period during which Orpen managed to make existence yield him his full measure of happiness. His successful career as a portrait painter was by then assured, though the demands made by it upon his time had not yet assumed a scale that made him a slave to his duty or prevented him from passing the summer months with his family by the sea. Of course, a holiday meant for Orpen little more than a welcome change of surroundings, new subjects for his brush and pencil, and freedom to paint or draw whatever the spirit moved him to paint or draw. For if Hokusai signed himself "the old man mad about drawing," Orpen might well have appropriated the variant "the young man mad about painting."

These pictures of life by the sea and among the Irish hills, of gipsies and devil-may-care vagrants, of open-air sketching and children playing, breathe the spirit of physical well-being and freedom from mental worries. They are filled with sunlight—the mild sunlight of a damp climate—and caressed by the gentle breezes of heaven. Some of them are even distinguished by an impressionistic feeling for atmosphere, moisture-laden and vibrant, that is not usually found in his none too abundant landscape work. Somehow the landscape setting to his portraits and genre pictures, if they happen to be out-of-door subjects, is as a rule subordinated to the human interest, at times to the verge of eighteenth century conventionality. He had the authority of Raeburn and Lawrence, among others, to transplant an obviously studio-lit head into a heavily clouded landscape—a time-honoured convention which has come to be accepted regardless of its incongruity.

But in "Midday on the Beach" and kindred pieces the figures are merged into complete unity with their surroundings. The rounded, large, soft-edged touch now adopted by Orpen served him in the place of the firm, constructive

“*Bright Morning by the Sea*”

brush-stroke of his earlier manner, and was admirably suited for the suggestion of that hazy atmosphere which robs the sunlight of its full strength and adds to the enjoyment of the holiday-makers *dolce far niente*. The picture is the spontaneous expression of exuberant *joie de vivre*, engendered by freedom from the restraint of social conventions and by the invigorating breezes of salt-laden sea air.

It is impossible for me to recall in detail the numerous country life pictures painted by Orpen in these happy years, but on searching my notes taken at the time, I find these references: “‘In the Dublin mountains,’ with its superbly painted bear whose fur is rendered in all its inviting warm softness, with all the skill that is at that brilliant young artist’s command. . . . A fine design is formed by the gipsywoman, the gaunt lank figure of the man cutting boldly into the grey sky, and caravan on the right; but all this fades from one’s memory, which only retains the sensation of positive physical pleasure communicated by the downy softness and marvellous texture of the bear’s coat. Not only in this, but even to a greater extent in the portrait of a young woman ‘On the Cliff,’ and in the tragi-comic painting of a paddling baby watching ‘The Wreck’ of a toy boat—tragic in the threatening mood of sky and waters—Orpen seems to adopt the grey palette of Frans Hals in his declining period. The greys are run through every colour, producing a certain decorative unity of effect which, if carried further, would threaten to degenerate almost into absence of colour. But Orpen is an artist too deeply interested in the objective aspect of nature to become the victim of any such mannerism.”

And again, referring to Orpen’s exhibits at the Goupil Gallery Salon: “His oil-painting ‘Bright Morning by the Sea’ is an extraordinarily fine achievement. It is a study of a lady revelling in the healthy enjoyment of a sharp breeze tempered by the warmth of the morning sun, the shadow-destroying power of which fills the whole canvas with a hazy radiance. It is impossible to speak too enthusiastically about his marvellously delicate and yet incisive drawings in pencil heightened by transparent washes in water-colour. Nothing could be further from Orpen’s aims in such drawings as ‘The Life Class on the



PLATE XLIV

1910

ON THE IRISH SHORE

A Wide Field of Experiment

Beach,¹ or 'Nude Study,' than the classic perfection of Ingres. Yet in the mastery of his life-giving pencil-line he recalls the crayon work by the greatest figure draughtsman of the nineteenth century."

The majority of these happy *plein-air* pictures belong to the year 1910, which in some ways may be regarded as the climax of Orpen's career. Not that he had reached the apex of his artistic development, or that later years did not witness the production of masterpieces, particularly in portraiture, which, more perhaps than any of his earlier works, establish his position among the outstanding figures in British twentieth century art. Not that even in his least inspired moments there was ever a slackening of that stern self-discipline which made him attend to the most uncongenial task with all the concentration and solid craftsmanship that were at his command. But the fact remains that after the outburst of joyous self-expression in 1910, when every picture was an experiment, an adventure, an assertion of independence, he took up portrait painting as a business—a business that, even when irksome, had to be attended to conscientiously—with such occasional intervals of recreation as he found when he had leisure to recapture the creative mood, or when he painted his friends or sitters who stimulated him by their personal magnetism.

That his labour of duty is not divided by a wider gulf from his labour of love, is greatly to Orpen's credit. The fruitful year 1910 was entirely devoted to the labour of love. And this labour ranges over a prodigious field and shows nowhere a trace of such technical mannerisms as detract from the æsthetic value of some of his later "duty work." This same year saw the production of intimate interior portraits rivalling in exquisiteness the work of the seventeenth century Dutch small masters, straightforward portraits on a larger scale; *plein-air* landscapes with figures, portraits of the artist himself, each of which is a new technical experiment; decorative compositions, such as "On the Irish Shore," and dramatic architectural subjects like "The Knacker's Yard."

Most artists' style is subject to evolutionary changes as they advance in years and experience; but I doubt whether

¹ This drawing is now in the Duke of Marlborough's Collection,

The Square Canvas

in the whole history of art there is another instance of a painter adopting simultaneously and at will such vastly different methods of pictorial expression, and adopting them with such gusto and apparent conviction. Like every student, he had been influenced by various masters. Of this his Slade prize picture "Hamlet" had been a frank admission. But he had by now passed through the student's stage, and none of the many Protean aspects of his activity in 1910 indicates imitation of any particular master. Orpen just happened to have the power of controlling his vision to suit his purpose, and of adapting his technique to his manner of visualization.

The ease with which Orpen could apply himself to a new type of subject and at the first attack triumph over difficulties which it takes less favoured mortals years to master, is best exemplified by the painting of a race-horse in the paddock—"Sergeant Murphy and Things" was the quaint title of the picture when shown at the Royal Academy in 1924. To do justice to the "points" of a famous thoroughbred requires a long course of specialized study, but here we find Orpen on his first and isolated attempt competing on his own ground—and competing successfully—with A. J. Munnings, the painter *par excellence* of the small equestrian landscape-portrait. By landscape-portrait I mean the picture in which the artist does not concentrate his attention upon his equine sitter, adding the landscape setting as a more or less conventional and perfunctorily treated background, but in which horse and landscape are visualized as a pictorial entity and indissolubly connected by spatial and atmospheric values.

Conversation Pieces & Experiments in Lighting

ORPEN'S FIRST PORTRAITS WERE, AS WE HAVE SEEN, clearly painted under the spell of Whistler's portraits of his mother and of Thomas Carlyle. From them was derived, not only the pattern of the seated figure on the square canvas, but the sober, low colour-scheme with its dominant greys and browns, of the "Augustus John" and "Herbert Everett." A predilection for the square shape so rarely used in portrait painting—although the fashion set by Orpen has found many followers in recent years—and for the seated figure in profile, for which this shape lends itself so well, remained with Orpen throughout his life. He must have used the formula well over a hundred times, from these early portraits of his friends and fellow-students, to which belongs the one of George Beresford, incongruously seated in immaculate towny attire—silk hat, gloves, cane, and all—in a rather desolate Irish landscape, to some of his latest commissions from transatlantic magnates. George Beresford, by the way, was the McTurk of Kipling's *Stalky and Co.* He was in the Indian Civil Service before he entered the Slade School, and eventually he gave up the brush for the camera and established a reputation as one of the leading artist-photographers.

A clear line of demarcation cannot always be easily drawn between some of these early portraits and subject pictures or studies in which life-like representation is a matter of secondary importance, the real subject being the solution of some pictorial problem, such as the candle-light effect in the first portrait painted by the artist, in 1901, of Grace Knewstub, who was to become Lady Orpen. Any other model might have served as well for the purpose, for there is in the features but little definition and but the

merest indication of the charm that distinguishes the Tate Gallery portrait of 1907, where Lady Orpen is depicted leaning forward, her chin resting on her gloved hands, her fair head under a veiled mushroom hat ; or the magnificent early portrait with a red coral necklace and a blue bird's feather in the hat, which appeared again at the Royal Academy in 1932, after the artist's death, surprising even his staunchest admirers by the perfection of craftsmanship attained by Orpen at so early an age, thanks largely to his close study of Rembrandt's technique.

Another painting which should be classed as a genre picture rather than a portrait, and in which the solution of a pictorial problem is of paramount importance, is the "Lottie of Paradise Walk" (New English Art Club, 1905). It represents a cockney flower-girl, of provoking and impudent aspect, with the outline of her face lost in the dark background, and is a most attractive rendering of a familiar London street type. To the same category belongs the delightfully elfish and certainly more Hibernian than Iberian "Little Spanish Dancer," of 1907.

Throughout this early stage of his career Orpen, though qualifying rapidly for the position he was destined to occupy as the leading portrait painter of his time, was far more interested in the opportunity his sitters afforded him as material for picture-making than in their character and psychology. It was at a much later date, when his attitude had undergone a complete change, that he wrote in a Sunday paper : "The line which separates character from caricature is very narrow and delicate. It is not a difference that you can measure with a foot-rule. . . . It is a quality in the painter's mind that sees what a man is rather than what he looks like. For frequently, if you paint only what you see with your eyes, you will be painting a lie. . . . I have often seen unsympathetic or repellent photographs of a man who turned out charming when you met him. The man had the same face but a different heart, and it is with the heart that the portrait painter is concerned."

But in the years of the century's infancy, Orpen, as I have already stated, troubled less about character and about looking below the surface of the mask than about the organization of tone and light, form and colour. It is not



PLATE XLV

1900

GRACE KNEWSTUB

Later Lady Orpen

PLATE XLVI

1907

A BLOOMSBURY FAMILY

The Nicholson Family



Conversation Pieces

surprising, then, that he showed a marked preference for the intimate interior portrait, where the sitter is just an incident—the most important incident, of course—in what might almost be called a still-life arrangement; where he is painted on a scale that precludes searching characterization, but where an indication of his character is suggested at least by the *milieu* in which he passes his daily life and which reflects his tastes, his occupation, his mentality. These interior portraits are something in the nature of the eighteenth century “conversation pieces,” even though the conversation is in many cases merely a monologue. But unlike their eighteenth century prototypes, which were as a rule painted with a cast-iron precision that took no account of the effect of circumambient atmosphere upon the appearance of people and objects—Zoffany may be quoted as a typical instance—Orpen’s interiors do full justice to the play of light and shade upon the surfaces, registering the most subtle nuances with an accuracy for the like of which one has to turn to the masterpieces of Vermeer and Metsu. The astonishing feature about Orpen’s small scale interior portraits is that they produce an impression of microscopically rendered detail, although close scrutiny proves them to be painted with a broad touch and with avoidance of sharply defined contours. It is by his vibrant treatment of the edges that Orpen achieved the fusion and unity which create the illusion of very life seen through a reducing glass.

The first of these conversation pieces was the family group of Captain Sir George C. Swinton, Lyon King-at-Arms, with his wife and two children and pet dog, the commission for which was entrusted to him in 1900, soon after he had completed his course at the Slade School. It was followed in 1903 by the Wyndham Quinn family group, and, in 1905, by two delightful portraits of the Hon. Mrs. Percy Wyndham in the intimate atmosphere of her home.

Quite the most fascinating of all these introductions into the privacy of home life is the inimitably quaint and slyly humorous “A Bloomsbury Family,” depicting a brother artist, William Nicholson, enjoying a post-prandial siesta in the midst of his family circle, his four children

Portrait Interiors

gathered round the table, and his wife, in street attire, door-knob in hand, about to leave the room. The small picture is as crowded with incident as the wall is with framed prints—Dighton caricatures apparently—and every detail of table-ware, decanters and coffee-cups and so forth on the white table-cloth, furniture and ornamental objects, is painted with the same loving precision. Yet so cunning is the arrangement of the design, the disposition of the six figures round the expanse of white table-cloth, that the wandering eye is inevitably drawn from this much needed area of repose towards the faces of the sitters, the abundant accessories retiring to subordinate positions. And rarely in the whole history of art has the ingenuous, innocent charm of childhood been more happily and sympathetically expressed than in the faces and attitudes of this youthful quartette. The “Bloomsbury Family” is now owned by the Scottish Modern Arts Association.

To the same year belongs the no less remarkable portrait of the Hon. Percy Wyndham in his study, surrounded by his books and papers, furniture and pictures, which contribute as much as his personal appearance towards the elucidation of his character. It would be mere redundancy to describe the portraits of Sir Guy Laking, the King's Armourer, in his apartment in St. James's Palace, of Mrs. St. George at Clonsilla, of Miss Harmsworth, Robert Littlejohn, Louis R. Tomalin, the Birkbeck Family, and others of the same intimate type. But there are two of these portrait interiors which call for comment, if only for the light they throw upon Orpen's shrewd perception of the revelation of character by material surroundings. The sharp contrast between the two is made the more significant by the fact that they were painted almost simultaneously, and justifies the conclusion that it must have been the artist's intention to lay stress upon the manner in which the *milieu* expresses a man's personality. The two portraits in question are those of Charles Wertheimer and J. H. FitzHenry, both painted in 1908.

In FitzHenry and Wertheimer, Orpen found two different types of art experts and collectors: the one who gave his home the appearance of a *brocanteur's* shop, and the other who made his shop a real home. Both had an



PLATE XLVII

1908

CHARLES WERTHEIMER

infinite love of all that was best in the art production of all periods and nations, and both had that infallible flair for quality, which is a more valuable qualification for the collector than any amount of book-learned knowledge. FitzHenry was an amateur collector; Charles Wertheimer was frankly a dealer, although he had no shop, but transacted his business in his sumptuously furnished house in Norfolk Street, Park Lane. But whereas FitzHenry was urged by a spirit of acquisitiveness which made him turn his living-rooms into store-rooms crammed with precious objects in such profusion that it was impossible to move, and more impossible to get any enjoyment from them, Wertheimer knew how to arrange his treasures with taste and discretion, and to make them look as if they belonged to the place they occupied. That may have been good salesmanship, for Wertheimer, much as he loved his treasures, would, if pressed, sell the Sèvres porcelain and Georgian silver from his dining table, or the Persian carpet from under his feet. But there is no question that he managed to squeeze the last ounce of enjoyment out of his treasures. The one revelled in the mere fact of possession; the other derived æsthetic pleasure from the presence of the choice works of art which passed through his hands.

There is no doubt that Orpen's sympathy was with the dealer, and that he was more amused than impressed by the amateur collector's acquisitiveness. There is just a touch of harmless malice, a hint of sarcasm in his conscientious rendering of the innumerable objects which made FitzHenry's rooms uninhabitable; whilst the few precious paintings—Gainsborough's adorable "Miss Linley" and a portrait of a girl with a dog by Lawrence—and bronzes in Wertheimer's study, and, above all, the marvellously painted crystal chandelier, appear as precious objects in a perfect ensemble. One might say that Orpen produced a dry catalogue in the one case, and gave a loving description of admired objects in the other.

Both in the rendering of the still-life and of the full-length portrait on a minute scale the Wertheimer portrait must be considered Orpen's supreme achievement in the field of the *intérieur intime*. It has the complete unity, the

The New English Art Club

cast-in-one-mould effect, the perfect relation of part to part, which results from the absolutely true registration of colour and tone values. And as regards the actual portraiture, Orpen produced not only a perfect likeness, but revealed his sitter's character in his pose, in the very hang of his coat and the creases of his trousers. The two men knew and understood each other. Wertheimer, with his infallible artistic flair, had been one of the first to discover and appreciate the young Irish painter's exceptional gifts, and there was a strong bond of sympathy between these two men, far apart though they were in age and in character. Orpen regarded even his patron's faults with amused indulgence and appreciated his strange mixture of generosity and hardness. The same man who lavished gifts of the choicest wines and cigars by the dozen boxes upon his young protégé, would brusquely refuse him a trifling payment on account of the nearly completed picture : "Business is business, our arrangement is payment on delivery, and not a penny will I pay before the picture is finished."

The Wertheimer portrait was to mark a turning-point in Orpen's career. Almost from the day when he left the Slade School, Orpen had been an active member and one of the main pillars of the New English Art Club. This Society was then the most important exhibiting body outside the Royal Academy, and counted among its members the leaders of those who rebelled against the academic routine and stood for progress and independence. The Club was considered hostile to the Royal Academy, and most of its members, Orpen amongst them, refused to submit their work to the Academy jury—which did not prevent the Royal Academy from continually drawing new life-blood from the enemy camp. But until comparatively recent years it was either the actual rule, or at least the time-honoured, invariable custom of the Royal Academy not to elect to the Associateship any artist who had abstained from exhibiting at Burlington House. Orpen, as a staunch supporter of the New English Art Club, was among those who could not be induced to court favour with the forty Immortals. But Wertheimer, as a practical business man, knew the commercial value of the letters A.R.A. or R.A.

PLATE XLVIII

1909

HOMAGE À MANET





PLATE XLIX

1912
THE CAFÉ ROYAL

behind an artist's name, and was determined to overcome Orpen's objection.

I am not quite sure whether he persuaded Orpen to send his portrait to the Royal Academy, or whether he actually sent it himself without the artist's knowledge and consent, but the fact remains that the little masterpiece was hung in the place of honour in the so-called "gem room" at Burlington House in 1910, and that it took the town by storm. So far Orpen had been appreciated by a very limited circle of art lovers: now his fame had reached the large public. A picture like the Charles Wertheimer portrait combined the qualities which it takes a professional painter or expert to appreciate with those which are obvious even to the man in the street.

It was almost a foregone conclusion, now that the ice was broken, that Orpen would be chosen to fill the first vacancy for the Associateship of the Royal Academy. He was elected Associate in 1910, and by accepting the new dignity he renounced to a very large extent the untrammelled freedom he had hitherto enjoyed, and settled down to a life of unremitting honest labour and almost unbelievable pecuniary success. It is significant that his carefully-kept account book contained until 1910 a minute pencil sketch of every picture recorded, and that these graphic entries cease in the year of his election. Commissions poured in torrentially, and he could no longer waste time on these thumbnail sketches. His Diploma picture, "The Chef of the Hotel Chatham," was not deposited in the Diploma Gallery until 1921.

In the year of his election and the two following years Orpen still found it possible occasionally to follow his bent for the portrait interior which requires far more time than the conventional kind of portrait, owing partly to the abundance of carefully wrought detail, but even more to the fact that it has to be painted, not in the artist's studio, but in the sitter's home. The time was approaching when every hour of Orpen's working day was mapped out, and when the departing client met his successor on the threshold. But with the portrait of the Hon. Sir Eric Barrington, K.C.B., shown at the Royal Academy in 1910, the year of his election, Orpen still rivalled the triumph of

“Homage à Manet”

the Charles Wertheimer interior, at least in the perfection of the objective rendering of every detail in the room—the little round mirror, the shadow on the white wall, the chair, and the black and white tiles on the floor, which absorbed as much, and the same degree, of the artist’s attention as the distinguished sitter himself. That Orpen regarded the setting in these pictures at least of equal, if not of paramount, importance, is clearly shown by the title chosen by the artist for the “Interior, 25 Park Lane, with Sir Philip and Sybil Sassoon.” From the sitter’s point of view this may be putting the cart before the horse, but it indicates the artist’s attitude in unmistakable fashion. He was concerned with creating a *picture*, and not a document to satisfy the curiosity of future generations.

Though perhaps not as exquisite and precious in execution as the Wertheimer interior, the group of the artist’s friends gathered around the tea-table at his house in Bolton Gardens, under Manet’s portrait of Eva Gonzalés, is the most impressive and important of all Orpen’s conversation pieces. Following the precedent of Fantin-Latour’s “Homage à Delacroix,” he gave the picture the title “Homage à Manet,” although it is really a tribute to his friend Sir Hugh Lane. This discerning connoisseur and art enthusiast had just added Manet’s masterpiece to the magnificent collection of French Impressionist paintings which he intended to bequeath to the city of Dublin, but which has now been incorporated with the National Gallery of British Art at Millbank, although an unwitnessed codicil to Lane’s will affords irrefutable evidence that, at the time of his tragic death, when the *Lusitania* was sunk by a German submarine, he had reverted to his original and subsequently revoked intention of leaving it to the Irish nation. Orpen always remained a staunch supporter of the very legitimate Irish claim which has not been abandoned to this day.

Fantin-Latour had also painted a “Homage à Manet.” But both in this and in his “Homage à Delacroix” the artists and literary celebrities assembled in the studio have without exception an air of conscious posing, and are either staring out of the canvas or fixing their gaze upon one point of interest, whilst in Orpen’s group they are seen

PLATE L

THE MODEL



“The Café Royal”

at perfect ease, each in his most characteristic natural attitude, as though they were wholly unaware of being under the artist's watchful eye. There is George Moore, with a paper in his hand, addressing the others with an air of challenge; Wilson Steer heavily leaning with his elbows on the table; Walter Sickert, with his hands clutching the lapels of his coat; Henry Tonks, comfortably reclining in an easy-chair and listening attentively to George Moore's harangue, whilst his hands are fidgeting with a knife; and Hugh Lane and D. S. MacColl, all recognizable by their attitude as much as by their deftly indicated features.

Compared with this apparently haphazard, but in fact carefully planned, glimpse of real life, the Fantin-Latour “homage” groups assume the aspect of petrified *tableaux vivants*. The asymmetry of the composition, caused by the massing of four figures on the extreme right, contributes towards the effect of an accidental snapshot, but the balance is restored by the introduction of the marble Venus in the corresponding position on the left. The picture which, apart from its very high artistic merits, is of considerable interest as a historical document, is now in the Manchester City Art Gallery.

Of considerable documentary value as an illustration of, and humorous comment on, a phase of London's Bohemian life in the full and happy days just before the outbreak of the Great War, is the interior of “The Café Royal,” which formed part of Sir Edmund Davis's gift of modern English paintings to the Luxembourg Museum. Not only was the Café Royal in those days the acknowledged centre of London's artistic and intellectual life, where poets, musicians, painters, sculptors and journalists would meet and sharpen their wits over an *apéritif*, or late in the evening after the play or concert, but its very effective, if a trifle gaudy decoration of mirrors and gilt caryatids was not without direct influence on an important manifestation of British art, for it was admittedly from this setting that Aubrey Beardsley had largely derived his inspiration for his exotic drawings.

It was this setting, too, that attracted Orpen, who devoted to the painting of it many Sunday mornings, introducing

Complicated Effects

into it afterwards some portraits of his friends and fellow-artists—William Nicholson in ultra-dandified get-up; George Moore, angrily stalking out of the room; Augustus John, whose studied carelessness of attire is in striking contrast with the spick-and-spanness of James Pryde, to whom he is talking over his shoulder; farther back, Alfred Rich and Orpen himself in a modest corner. The picture is conceived in a less serious mood than the "Homage à Manet" group, and the characterization of some of the portraits has more than a touch of caricature. Technically it is a brilliant achievement, marred only by the impossible spatial relations of the waiter both to the glittering interior and to its occupants. He does not fit either into the perspective or the tone of the picture, and for this reason assumes undue prominence.

At the time when the "Café Royal" was first exhibited, in 1912, Orpen was blamed for having overwhelmed the figures with the elaboration of the gaudy setting. I can see no justification for this reproach. He deserves, on the contrary, unstinted admiration for the tact, the restraint with which, and without suppressing any essential truth, he has subordinated the florid background to the actors in the little comedy. It is true, at first, in looking at the picture, one experiences something of the same sense of bewilderment which one would feel on entering the glittering over-decorated café, uncertain as to what is solid reality and what merely mirrored reflection of reality. But the figures nevertheless stand out boldly—too boldly in the case of the waiter—and maintain their right relation to the rest.

It was in struggling with, and triumphing over, such difficulties as were presented by the mirrored walls of the Café Royal, or by very complicated effects of brilliant sunlight filtering through Venetian blinds into his bright and spacious studio and superimposing a shifting geometric pattern of light and shade upon the permanent pattern formed by the objects and posing model, that Orpen, now a fashionable portrait painter, found recreation and relief from the drudgery of his daily routine. The problem offered by the struggle between the unsubstantial geometric shadow picture and the permanent form which constitutes,

PLATE LI

1910

MYSELF & CUPID



Light Effects

as it were, its canvas, never ceased to fascinate an artist who always had an eye for bizarre effects.

"Sunlight" and "The Model" are the most notable pictures of this type, in which he worked free from all restraint, displaying all his virtuosity and an almost feverish vivacity. So startling is the effect of the streaks and splashes of light cutting into the solid forms, that at the first glance the spectator is almost turned giddy. It is only when one's eye has become accustomed to the radiance and glitter which suffuse the scene, that the broken forms re-assemble and reveal their significance, and that one begins to appreciate the mastery with which the artist has overcome the stupendous difficulties of his self-imposed task. Orpen had now gone a long way since the days when he competed with the Dutch small masters in the precise and minute rendering of the normal aspects of indoor life; but his vision remained as keen and true as ever. Truth in art is a relative term. He had now substituted the truth of the Impressionist vision and Impressionist sun-worship for the sober truth of subdued tone values.

Portraits & Self-Portraits

IN HIS "DUTY WORK" ORPEN DID NOT INDULGE IN SUCH artistic adventure. He had by this time evolved a formula based on his vast experience in the most varied methods of pictorial expression. He knew what he owed to his clients, and he did not presume to make use of them as models for experiments in picture-making. The utmost clarity in the definition of each feature, combined with incisive rendering of character, were invariably his goals upon which he concentrated with never-relaxing intensity. There was enough of the methodical upright business man in Orpen to make him eschew the arrogant, uncompromising, take-it-or-leave-it attitude of the artist who presumes to disregard his client's legitimate claims in the pursuit of an abstract æsthetic ideal. Orpen never took his duties lightly, even when he allowed his whimsicality and sense of humour to give spice to his reading of character, or even when he was utterly out of sympathy with his sitter. But he never embarked on his task of straightforward representation until he had evolved a rhythmically balanced design and a harmonious and effective colour scheme that would satisfy his artistic conscience. With the complete homogeneous *picture* firmly fixed in his mind, he could concentrate upon the *portrait*—concentrate with an intensity that absorbed his vitality to such an extent as to lead at times to physical exhaustion after a short hour's sitting.

Orpen very rarely talked "shop"; and he never, as far as my experience goes, spoke slightly of the work of brother artists. Indeed, his catholicity of taste enabled him to give the most generous praise to manifestations of art with which one would hardly have expected him to be in sympathy. There was one occasion though when, in



PLATE LII

1910

THE SKETCHER

Alfred Rich

His High Level of Work

confidential mood, he dropped his habitual reserve and criticized, with a slight tinge of bitterness, not indeed the work of any individual artist, but of contemporary English portrait painters in general. I have a vivid recollection of this conversation, although I cannot pretend to the accuracy of a verbatim report :

“What is wrong with them all,” he said, “is that they have no conscience. They think portrait painting is an easy job. And, believe me, it is not ! It is hard work, terribly hard work. But these people are too lazy. They are too lazy to use their eyes ; they don’t observe, and what they do see, they only see superficially ; and what is seen superficially will inevitably be painted superficially. Let me explain it by one instance. Is there a single one among the younger men who in his paintings shows that he knows the form and construction of the human eye ? If there is, I have not come across him. The eyeball is a globe from which the iris projects like a boss. Do you ever find an indication of that projection in any of their portraits ? I do my honest best to see all there is to be seen and to paint all that I see. If the eyes in my pictures look real, it is because I know the construction of the human eye and paint it truthfully.”

It was the only occasion on which I heard Orpen talk about his own work and though he frankly spoke of the superiority of his own efforts, there was not the slightest suggestion of conceit in his explanation. If he claimed credit, it was not for his artistic achievement, but for his honest endeavour to do his best. The extraordinarily life-like appearance which is so striking a feature in all of Orpen’s portraits is certainly due to the penetrating keenness of his observation, which takes account of such subtle points as the curve of the iris.

In the course of just over thirty years Orpen produced close upon six hundred portraits and portrait groups. To expect a uniform level of excellence in so stupendous an output would be crediting him with the power of a super-man. But it may be safely asserted that he never painted a bad picture, or rather that he never allowed a bad picture to leave his studio, for there are instances when he found himself so utterly out of sympathy with his sitter, that he

Portrait Lighting

felt it was courting failure to persist in his task, and preferred to throw up the sponge and leave the portrait unfinished. The worst that can be said of him is, that over-production resulted in frequent repetition of certain compositional formulas, and occasionally in a mannered touch more suitable for the rendering of woolly material than for the suggestion of human flesh and bone.

His early-acquired complete command of draughtsmanship and understanding of the human frame made him, in the years of his maturity, dispense with "drawing" in the narrower sense of the word. That is to say, his method of painting came to have a closer affinity to the sculptor's method of building up his forms with little lumps of clay by pressure of the thumb, than to that of the draughtsman who obtains structural emphasis by linear definition. Many of his later pictures, when viewed closely, appear to be built up of fuzzy-edged touches of solid colour, applied with a round brush. The forms grow out of the paint without any clearly marked contour, without any apparent scaffolding of linear drawing.

In his compositional arrangements Orpen frequently used for his portraits the square, or the almost square, oblong shape cut diagonally across by the main lines of the seated figure. Notable instances are the portraits of Sir William MacCormick and of Dame Madge Kendal, both in the National Gallery of British Art; Sir Ray Lankester, destined, I believe, for the National Portrait Gallery, when sufficient time has elapsed to make it eligible; the Earl of Derby, Lord Plumer, and Rowland Knodler, all of which rank among Orpen's greatest achievements. When he adopts the more conventional pyramidal shape, he generally, far from attempting to make it less obvious, accentuates it by symmetrical rigidity of pose, with arms akimbo, or both elbows resting on the arms of a chair, as in the portraits of the Earl Spencer, Colonel Elkington, and many others. Very often, however, the severity of the pyramidal form is ingeniously counteracted by the gathering of the curtain-folds in the background from the top corners towards the centre, instead of directing them in the customary way from the top centre towards the sides, so that the main lines of the composition radiate towards the

PLATE LIII

1916

THE RT. HON. THE VISCOUNT BRYCE, O.M., P.C., LL.D.



PLATE LIV

1925

THE RT. HON.

SIR THOMAS MOLONY

Lord Chief Justice of Ireland



corners, cutting diagonally across the canvas. I believe this device to be an invention of Orpen's. At any rate, he was first to make extensive use of it, and his example has been followed since by many portrait painters. It was adopted with conspicuous success by Augustus John in his famous portrait of Madame Suggia.

Another departure from customary methods is to be found in the lighting of Orpen's portraits. In his early work he accepted the normal conditions of daylight in the studio or ordinary living-room, and placed his sitter either facing the source of light, or turned sideways, to show one side of the face in light, the other in shadow. That was when he was interested in the registration of subtle tone values in a comparatively low key of colour. But in his later period, after his return from the Western Front, when he devoted himself almost exclusively to portrait painting, he found normal conditions incompatible with his aim, which was the achievement of something more permanent and more complete than the capturing of the accidental appearance of a fleeting moment. He would not allow any feature that might contribute towards elucidating the complexity of his sitter's character, or any detail of modelling that might help to create the illusion of plastic reality, to be lost in the vagueness of shadow; no part of the face to be merged in the darkness of the background. A clear silhouette had to stand out, light against dark, or coloured against white (as in many of his Peace Conference portraits, where the background is formed by the untouched primed canvas), and every surface movement, every change of plane within that silhouette, had to be placed on record.

To achieve this end, Orpen arranged the light in his studio so as to strike the sitter from both sides (though not with equal strength), thus eliminating all heavy shadows. Needless to say, in doing so he complicated his task enormously and went out of his way to create considerable difficulties. He deliberately deprived himself of the most convenient and effective means of indicating projection and recession by emphasis of light and shade. But difficulties had no terror for him: they rather acted as a stimulant. As a natural consequence of picking out the faces in sharp silhouette, Orpen, to maintain consistency, had to

Robes of Office

give equally clear definition to all details of dress and accessories, and to accentuate the pattern of bright and only slightly modified local colour—all of which helped to enhance the decorative appeal of his portraits. It is for this reason that his portraits are never dull or dingy and hold their own as decoration, even in the rare cases where the “likeness” fails to arouse interest.

Many times it has been Orpen’s task to paint his sitter in surroundings of pomp and circumstance, in the official robes of judge or mayor or Knight of the Garter; in silk and gold braid, with chains and orders and other insignia of rank. Never in these ceremonial portraits did he allow the glitter and splendour of gold and jewels, silk and velvet to overwhelm the personality of the sitter; never does the mass of conscientiously painted accessory detail monopolize attention at the expense of the face; never did he fail—and therein he had no rival—to reconcile the clash of assertive and sometimes gaudy colours, and to evolve harmony from material in which less gifted painters would only find discord.

A typical instance is the portrait of the Rt. Honble. Sir Thomas Molony, Lord Chief Justice of Ireland. The problem with which the artist was faced was, to make the assertive scarlet of the robes take their proper place in the general scheme, so that it should not detract from the psychological interest of the portraiture. Orpen achieved this end by harmonizing the colours and modifying the flesh tones to suit the neighbouring areas of brilliant red. In the portrait of the Marquess of Bath, shown at the Royal Academy in the same year as that of the Irish judge, the luminous freshness of a cool scheme of black, white and blue is helped by the ingenious device of spreading the dark blue velvet Garter cloak curtainwise across the background, the sitter himself wearing dress clothes with knee-breeches, the only splash of colour being the Garter ribbon and the blue of the Garter on the black stocking.

Where most portrait painters are embarrassed by the pageantry of costume and insignia, which fits so badly into the drab scheme of modern life that a great deal of natural dignity is required to save its participants from appearing ridiculous under the burden of its mediævalism,

PLATE LV

1920

SIR CHARLES VILLIERS STANFORD, BT.





PLATE LVI

1919

FIELD-MARSHAL
THE RT. HON. THE VISCOUNT PLUMER
G.C.B., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O.

Sympathetic Interpretation

Orpen was immensely stimulated by the opportunities it afforded him to escape from the monotonous dreariness of modern costume. Somehow his robed dignitaries appear "to the manner born"—they never look ridiculous. Even Lord Leverhulme, attired in a mayoral robe and massive chain and badge of such weight that it would entail a great physical effort for him to rise from his chair, looks as if he were quite accustomed to shouldering his load. He holds his chair firmly—and he made the chair an excuse for refusing to pay the artist for a full-length portrait. How could a seated figure, with foreshortened thighs, be accounted a full-length? The dispute was amicably settled; and the picture was presented to the Town Council of Bolton.

Sir Charles Villiers Stanford wears his academic silk with the air of a man who is accustomed to it. He is seated with crossed legs, in a listening attitude, with an expression of his face that suggests, as a witty critic observed, that he might be listening "to the *Sacre du Printemps* or to the Windmill episode from *Don Quixote*, or something else which has led him to believe that the world is in a bad way." Yet there is a merry twinkle in his eye, which belies the very severe expression. Lord Provost Spencer of Dundee, unlike Lord Leverhulme, apparently shrank from dressing up for his official portrait, and posed in an easy attitude, seated in an arm-chair and attired in a black suit, with his robes of state spread out beside him on a chair, although he wears the chain of office and medal of the civic head, in which the Caird emerald is particularly noticeable. Then there is Lord Merrivale in the grey, black and gold of the judge's dress, the details of which are painted with the same gusto as the fine lawn sleeves of His Grace the Archbishop of York, who is the subject of one of Orpen's most impressive evocations of a living personality—stern and yet kindly, thoughtful and calm, but with a fund of latent energy.

The list might be continued *ad infinitum*, but the mere description of his distinguished sitters with their costumes and insignia, unaccompanied by illustrations, would scarcely assist the reader's appreciation of Orpen's resourcefulness and ingenuity in doing justice to the outward signs.

Self-Portraits

of rank, whilst subordinating them to the human interest, to the revelation of the dominating traits of character. Of the alleged cruelty of his character-reading, of a tendency to dwell with relish on his sitter's foibles, I am unable to find a trace. On the contrary, there is ample evidence, not only in the portraits of his friends, but of people who must have been comparative strangers to him, that he was capable of profound sympathy; and if his whimsical sense of humour made him at times dwell upon the amusing aspects of his "victims," his interpretation is never tinged by malice.

Thus it is impossible to look without a smile upon his presentation of Lord Plumer. I have even heard it described as a caricature. But if you have read Orpen's war book, *An Onlooker in France*, and were to come across this portrait without knowledge of its identity, you could not but guess that this must be the lovable great Army leader who allowed his batman to address him in these familiar terms: "'Ere, you just sit up proper—not all 'unched up the way you are. What would Her Ladyship say if I let you be painted that way?" No more did Orpen presume to make fun of his sitter, when he allowed his good-natured sense of humour to peep through his reading of "the Earl Spencer, K.G." stiffened into column-like rigidity by the starched tube of a collar and the enormous cravat upon which professional caricaturists have so often spent their wit; or of "James Law, of 'The Scotsman,'" himself the very type of a dour, yet humorous Scotsman; of "Jacob Epstein," type of the American plutocrat with the inevitable juicy Habana wedged between his index and middle finger; of "Rowland Knöedler," remarkable for the very unusual and enchanting harmony of salmon pink, yellow and white in a daringly high key of colour; of "Viscount Bryce," whose air of fierceness almost touches caricature; and, among women, "Young Ireland," a whimsical portrait of Grace Gifford, who married Joseph Plunkett in Dublin prison the night before his execution in 1916.

If Orpen eschewed flattery as a means for gaining popularity as a portrait painter, he emphatically did not depart from his attitude of humorous frankness in his

PLATE LVII

1916

THE RT. HON. THE EARL SPENCER, K.G., P.C., G.C.V.O.



PLATE LVIII

1927

JACOB EPSTEIN
of Baltimore



Frankness of Self-Portraiture

graphic autobiography. His self-portraits are as numerous as Rembrandt's—perhaps more numerous if the works of questionable authenticity are eliminated from the list of Rembrandt's *œuvre*.

From his Slade School days to the close of his life, he cultivated the habit of taking an occasional busman's holiday from the exacting labour of painting other people, by posing to himself and recording the changes wrought upon his features by the passing of time, sometimes accompanying the portrayal with such laconic written comments as "Orpsie Boy, you're not as young as you were, my lad, Paris, 1924" or "Older again, Orpsie Boy." But as though he were afraid of being suspected of vanity, he went out of his way to avoid any assumption of dignity; and far from usurping the function of the beauty specialist, he rather revelled in accentuating the ruggedness of his features. He would have had a legitimate grievance, had any of his brother artists ventured to treat him with such brutal frankness.

Other painters, in their self-portraits, depict themselves as they would like to be. Even the great Rembrandt loved to deck himself in splendour far above his modest station—to play the part of a bold warrior in armour, or of a befurred and bejewelled patrician; and this outward pomp was frequently accompanied by nobility of mien or mysterious profundity of expression. Orpen, as I have said, exaggerated the ruggedness of his physiognomy, and, shrinking from any suggestion of dandyism, assumed a carelessness of attire more suitable for life in the poor West of Ireland than for a fashionable London studio, and quite the opposite of his own neat sartorial turn-out. Having made himself as unprepossessing as possible, he would stress the point still further by introducing, by way of contrast, a beautiful marble figure of Venus, which he treasured in his studio, or a copy of Verrocchio's adorable "Putto with the Dolphin" (which, by the way, served him, slightly modified, for the two cherubs over the catafalque in his memorial picture "To the Unknown British Soldier in France"). Or, he would pose as a "real lad," an ultra-Bohemian, surrounding himself with "still life"—not excluding "sparkling"—objects that would suffice to furnish a good-

"The Man with the Brush"

size bar. Or, again, he would assume the parts of jockey or gamekeeper, although he probably had never mounted a horse or fired a gun.

It is no more than may be expected that these chapters of fanciful autobiography should, almost without exception, rank among Orpen's finest achievements, for they are conceived in an experimental vein and painted with an enthusiasm undamped by the restraint imposed upon the professional portrait painter by his sense of duty to his sitters. Some of these portraits are, or rather purport to be, painted out of doors (the not very convincing relations of the figure to the landscape and clouded sky in "The Dead Ptarmigan," "The Jockey," and a few kindred pieces justifies a suspicion that they were painted in the studio)—others are ingeniously composed and very complicated genre pictures, in which the respective values of actual objects and mirror reflections are rendered with inimitable skill. Others, again, are straightforward portraits, without any accessories, inspired apparently by Chardin, whom Orpen must have had in his mind when he painted "The Man with the Brush." This portrait is Orpen's response to the invitation extended to him by the Uffizi Gallery in Florence to contribute a self-portrait to the *sala dei pittori*—a distinction reserved exclusively for the most famous artists of their time and country.

It is characteristic of Orpen that, in a picture intended to figure permanently among the alleged self-revelations of the world's great masters of painting through the ages, he represents himself in very informal attire—a yellow dressing-gown and a boudoir cap upon which he has pushed back his horn-rimmed spectacles. The portrait is distinctly unflattering, but does not fail to do justice to the magnetism of his eyes which are gazing out with piercing intentness as he holds up his brush, as if to measure some relative proportions. In technique the picture is rather mannered, the woolly touch, which serves so well for rendering the texture of the dressing-gown, being maintained even in the painting of face and hand.

Most of these auto-portraits have found their way into the museums of Europe and America. The bizarre "Myself and Venus"—the artist figures in it with a

PLATE LIX

1922

ROWLAND KNOEDLER



Dame Madge Kendal

grotesquely tall and very Irish bowler hat—belongs to the Carnegie Institute at Pittsburg; "Leading the Life of the West," to the Metropolitan Museum, New York; "The Jockey," to the Stockholm National Museum; the two self-portraits in war kit, to the Imperial War Museum; "The Dead Ptarmigan," to the Dublin National Gallery. Others are to be found in the Laing Art Gallery, the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, the Oldham Art Gallery, the St. Louis Gallery, and the Dublin Municipal Gallery.

Too much stress has perhaps been laid on the whimsical side of Orpen's visualization in portraiture and his tendency to introduce a touch of humour into his reading of character. The wit of his brush has somehow gained a stronger hold on the memory of the public than its intensely human sympathy and pathos. The portraits of Dame Madge Kendal and of Sir Ray Lankester are in themselves sufficient to dispel any doubt about his ability to deal with the more serious aspects of life and character. Upon their basis his position as the greatest portrait painter of his generation is secure. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that, setting aside the conventional decorative charm of the eighteenth century, with which the portrait of Dame Madge Kendal does not aspire to enter into competition, the British School of portrait painting has not produced anything finer than this profoundly sympathetic and infinitely subtle depiction of old age in full possession of all faculties and with the kindly tolerance gained by a long life's experience. She is portrayed, to quote the *Daily Telegraph* critic's admirable description in his review of the Royal Academy exhibition of 1928, "not only as a Grand Old Woman of the theatrical stage, but as a dramatic figure on the stage of life; only it is, as it should be, pictorial not theatrical drama." The observation of structural form is as searching as the sounding of character. Nothing could be more perfect than the indication of the pressure of the sitter's finger into the fleshy part of the cheek.

In the portrait of Sir Ray Lankester, Orpen deals with the pathetic aspect of old age. If in Dame Madge Kendal's alertness and sparkling eyes with their faint suggestion of a merry twinkle there is still a fund of

"The Surgeon"

vitality, Sir Ray Lankester's drooping lids, listless pose and tired expression indicate the man who is fully aware that his life's journey is fast approaching its ultimate goal. And there can be no doubt that Orpen, too, knew that he was painting a dying man; and the fact that the dying man was a friend made him invest this last tribute with infinite pathos. The very colour of the picture, tending towards pallor and drabness, assumes symbolical significance; and so does the system of loose, soft-edged touches of paint, which, in its avoidance of all energetic accentuation, seems to echo the dying man's resigned listlessness. The hush of the death chamber seems to linger over the artist's usually cheerful and boisterous palette.

It is always in the portraits of his friends, or of people with whom he felt in real sympathy, that Orpen reached the height of his artistic achievement. The more he was interested in the sitter, the more likely was he to abandon the technical mannerisms to which he was addicted in his busiest years, and to return to the young student's passionate quest of expressive form. Colonel Elkington, D.S.O., was one of the sitters who absorbed his interest to an extent that made him relegate his own personality to the background. Here, in the sympathetic collaboration between artist and sitter which is essential to all vital portraiture, the artist is entirely subordinated to the sitter. Everything is dominated by the distinguished soldier's suffering, careworn features.

Self-abnegation is not carried to the same extent in the brilliant portrait of Ivor Back, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1926 under the title of "*The Surgeon*"; for here the pictorial possibilities discovered by Orpen in the substitution of the surgical operator's white overall for the ordinary, dull, modern masculine attire, fascinated him as much as his friend's genial, handsome features. A similar problem had been tackled by him five years earlier, when he achieved the greatest popular success of his life with his painting of "*The Chef*." But Orpen knew full well, that, apart from the amazingly skilful rendering of such still-life accessories as the two chops, the bottle and the glass, "*The Chef*" was not a good picture; that the painting of the face was commonplace

PLATE LX

1925

THE MAN WITH THE PAINTBRUSH
Self-Portrait for the Uffizi Gallery,
Florence





PLATE LXI

1926

DAME MADGE KENDAL

"The Chef"

and lacking in subtlety; that there was no indication of the body under the snowy white costume. His amusement was tempered by a little bitterness, when in a confidential moment he commented upon the irony of fate which made one of his rare comparative failures contribute more than any far more significant pictures to his popular fame. "The Chef" was selected for purchase under the terms of the Chantrey Bequest, but was found to be ineligible, because it had not been painted on British soil. Orpen subsequently presented it to the Royal Academy as his Diploma work.

In the Ivor Back portrait Orpen makes full atonement for the shortcomings of "The Chef." The form and weight of the body are felt through the white overall, although the material is far from pliant or clinging. A superb passage of expressive painting is found in the hand. Although it is covered by a brown rubber glove and shown in a limp state of complete relaxation, it is unmistakably a capable hand, firm and sensitive and dependable in the professional use of the scalpel.

The War

THE OUTBREAK OF THE GREAT WAR FOUND ORPEN at the height of success and fame. When it came to the appointing of official artists to work at the front, it was almost inevitable that he should be one of the first painters selected. He proceeded to France, with the honorary rank of Major, and applied his rare gifts and ceaseless energy to the creation of a unique pictorial war record. The hundred and twenty-five drawings and paintings shown by him in the spring of 1918 at Agnew's Galleries in Bond Street, and generously presented by the artist to the nation, were the result of eighteen months' experience at the Western front. They comprise portraits of Army leaders, painted with his usual concentration on character, and with the swiftness and energy of a man for whom technical difficulties have long ceased to exist; landscapes of the ravaged battle zone, in which his joyful, optimistic temperament and his fine decorative instinct invest the grim reality of shell-torn soil and ruined buildings and splintered trees with the glory of a rich palette; scenes of tragedy and comedy—skeletons half buried in the baked mud of the trenches, terror-stricken French villagers during a nocturnal air raid, a soldier whom shell-shock has deprived of his wits, German prisoners caged in barbed wire, a Cockney Tommy's "Good-bye-ee" to his hosts at Cassel—tanks, guns, horses, dug-outs, mines, craters, hospitals, graves, observation posts—everything, in short, that came to his notice and seemed to him worthy of being recorded.

The super-critical, unable to find fault with Orpen on technical grounds, and forced to admit his supreme craftsmanship and the decorative beauty of his work, were

PLATE LXII

BLOWN UP—MAD



His View of War

heard to say: "Well, this is all very fine, but it is not the War—it is just Orpen." Perhaps they were right, but their sneer contained the highest praise for the artist. The development of photography in modern times has made the war artist superfluous when it comes to objective statement of facts. What is expected from the painter is just what the camera can never yield: personal vision. The mere fact that Orpen's personality peeps through all his work redounds to his credit. Orpen saw things differently from anybody else. His æsthetic and intellectual curiosity was dominated by his sense of style. His Irish humour was irrepressible, even when he dealt with horrors. It then took the form of the macabre and the grotesque. Only now and then did he strike a note of genuine pathos, as in his powerful drawing of "The Receiving Room: 42nd Stationary Hospital," which is worthy of the pencil of Daumier.

It has been said that Orpen's war pictures are heartless, and even that he enjoyed the war like a macabre carnival, and that he failed to realize its appalling significance and horror. I think these charges are unjust and based on a complete misunderstanding of his outlook. He adopted an apparently cold, objective point of view, because he found the cool statement of facts more dramatic than the exaggerations of those who make the very skies participate in the human drama and cannot imagine a tragedy taking place in bright sunshine. If he painted the ravages of war upon the tortured earth in cheerful, almost pretty colours, it was with a sense of the dramatic contrast between the mad destructiveness of man and the smiling indifference with which Nature looks upon his nefarious work. He saw poppies growing on blood-drenched ground.

Somehow Orpen was destined to be misunderstood and to be accused of satirical intention and levity when he felt most profoundly and when his intention was the most serious. One has only to recall the Press comments on the third of his three Peace Conference pictures, "To the Unknown British Soldier in France." It was to represent, according to his own explanation, "a room in the Palace of Versailles, called the Hall of Peace, the room through which you enter the long *Galérie des Glaces*, where the

To the Unknown British Soldier

Treaty was signed. It was arranged that I was to group there the politicians and generals and admirals who had won the war. I made studies for them. I painted the room, and then I grouped the whole thirty-nine, or whatever the number was, in the room. It took me nine months' incessant painting; hard work. And then, you know, I couldn't go on. It all seemed so unimportant somehow. In spite of all these eminent men, I kept thinking of the soldiers who remain in France for ever. Whether the Hall of Peace deserves its title or not, it must deserve it in future only so far as they gave it. So I rubbed all the statesmen and commanders out, and painted the picture as you see it—the unknown soldier guarded by his dead comrades. The long dark room behind them is the hall where the Treaty was signed. The cherubs? Well, I should not call them cherubs, nor did I see that they conflicted with the mood of the picture as a whole. But, whether I was right or wrong in that, you must believe that I painted it in all seriousness and in all humility. I have satirised nobody, nor did I intend to set any problem. All the meaning is in the title of the picture itself."

Here we have Orpen's avowed intention. To what extent it was misinterpreted may be gathered from this selection of criticisms from the daily and weekly Press:

"The nobility of the subject has escaped him."

"An ironical and satirical intention."

"... makes people shudder."

"Not a spark of true vision."

"A chill and grisly fancy."

"If his intention was serious he has failed, if not the picture is in bad taste."

"Marvellous still-life painting with unnecessary, irritating sentimental accessories."

Only one voice, in a chorus of disapproval or grudging praise, was raised to defend it as "*a cri de cœur*, beautiful yet painful in its poignancy."

Orpen had destroyed the result of nine months' hard work to pay his tribute to the soldier he loved and admired. The picture was found unacceptable in the condition in which it was shown at the Royal Academy, and had to be revised a second time before it was presented to the Imperial

PLATE LXIII

1917

CHANGING BILLETS, PICARDY



To the Unknown British Soldier

War Museum. In its present and final form, the catafalque stands unguarded in the bare hall, without its escort of dead Tommies and winged putti. It is interesting to note that the putti are inspired by Verrocchio's "Boy with the Dolphin," whilst the ghostly and ghastly soldiers are based on Orpen's own drawing "Blown up—Mad," a drawing which, in turn, appears to be inspired directly or indirectly by Picasso and thus constitutes a link with the modern movement.

Peace Conference & Later Pictures

WITH ALL ITS ORIGINALITY, BIZARRERIE OF INVENTION and freedom of brushwork Orpen's art, if in its later phases modified by sympathy with the Impressionist principles, had always had an anchor in the solid academic tradition. But unlike most of his academic colleagues, Orpen recognized the legitimacy and the significance of the modern movement and did not look with contempt upon the experiments of the "art rebels." And in some of his war paintings—the point seems to have escaped the notice of the critics—he actually adopted certain forms which can only be derived from Picasso. Orpen's alert and inquisitive mind, in fact, never shunned influences. Always eager to learn and ready to enlarge his experience, he was not afraid, whenever he was moved to do so, to attune his sensibility and visualization to the sensibility and visualization of other artists, to experiment in various modes of expression and assimilate methods which struck his fancy or roused his interest in the productions of other painters.

The instances of foreign influences which are found in different works of his are adaptations, rather than imitations, wittingly introduced into an ambit of personal conception, with precise and purposefully eclectic intent. Whomever Orpen might "copy," he always retains his personality, and, what is more, the conviction that this personality is strong enough never to let him founder into slavish imitation and to become a mere impersonator of somebody else's style. Had one pointed out to him in certain of his pictures definite adaptations from other artists, he would probably have replied, with his characteristic sense of humour, that it was no fault of his if he was born too late.

In the earlier stages he ventured wittingly among the



PLATE LXIV

BOMBING; NIGHT

Influence of Picasso

old masters in search, not only of documentation, but also of adventure. He used their work as a vocabulary, a guide book, or a novel, respectively to increase his technical knowledge, to discover new fields of action, or to get amusement and pleasure. We have seen how he adapted Rembrandt, Fragonard, Goya, Hogarth, Chardin, Rowlandson to his own purposes. That he also benefited by certain ultra-modern artists, with whom few would have expected him to be in sympathy, is made obvious by the great admiration he always professed for the etching of *Laboureur*, and in practice by such of his war pictures as "*Changing Billets*," "*Bombing ; Night*" and "*Blown Up—Mad*," where the treatment of the figures has a definite connection with Picasso. The pathos contained in the elongated and emaciated bodies and the angular inflexions of the limbs of the harlequins and saltimbanques which Picasso painted during his so-called "blue period," appears to have been fully recognized and appreciated by Orpen. The structural analogy between the figures in these war pictures and certain figures evolved by the Spanish artist more than ten years earlier is too striking to be considered a mere coincidence, and must be taken as proof that Orpen was in no way prejudiced against an art which in its manifestations appears to be so entirely opposed to his own. The analogy is, of course, entirely confined to the general form and does not extend to the technique. Those who are interested in following up this point may compare Orpen's "*Bombing ; Night*" with Picasso's "*La Famille au Singe*" and "*L'Eventail*," or "*Blown Up—Mad*" with "*Le Briteu*" and the etching "*Les Pauvres*." The analogy in each case is as clear as that between Orpen's "*Man Thinking*" and Rodin's "*Grand Penseur*."

Of Orpen's prodigious activity during the Peace Conference, my friend Dark is better qualified to speak than I, since his own work as correspondent brought him in daily contact with the official painter. It comprised not only the three large paintings of "*The Peace Conference at the Quai d'Orsay*," "*Signing of Peace in the Hall of Mirrors, Versailles*" and the "*Unknown Soldier*," all of which are now in the Imperial War Museum, but a series of very complete individual studies in oils of all the promi-

Peace Conference & Later Pictures

nent statesmen and soldiers who were assembled round the green baize to reshape the map of Europe. These sketches were subsequently bought by Sir James Dunn for £12,575, and sold by him at Christie's in 1926, when they realized a total of £13,602 15s.

After his return to civilian life, Orpen, as we have seen, resumed his normal routine as a fashionable portrait painter, with a studio in Paris—for the convenience of American clients—as well as in London. The demand upon his time had assumed such proportions as to allow him but little chance of escape to the realms of fancy. He worked incessantly and his output was prodigious, although it fell considerably short of the ever-growing demand. It is on record that an enterprising American dealer cabled him an offer of a fantastic amount, if he would agree to place himself at his disposal, I believe it was for six months, to tour the States and paint one hundred portraits to order. Orpen refused to give serious consideration to the offer, and cabled back laconically: "Too weak, try McEvoy."

Towards the end Orpen worked almost feverishly, although his health had begun to give way and his eyes were giving him cause for alarm. He painted no fewer than thirty portraits in 1930, the year before his death. The end came with tragic suddenness, although it was heralded by the three marble medium pictures he sent to the Royal Academy in 1931: "Eve in the Garden of Eden," "Palm Sunday" and "Pavlova." In the undiscerning these pictures created an impression that Orpen had suddenly "gone modern." To those gifted with the intuition that enables them to read below the surface, the pictures had pathological significance and indicated complete physical and mental disintegration. The hand had lost its cunning, the brain its keenness. The end was close at hand.

Orpen's last pictures do not mark a final step in his artistic evolution. They are the work of a man no longer in full possession of his faculties, and may without hesitation be eliminated from the sum-total of his artistic achievement. While they were still on view at Burlington House, Orpen had already taken up his quarters in a nursing home, from which he escaped occasionally, in defiance of doctor's orders, to spend an hour at his easel. No one will know what

Peace Conference and Later Pictures

happened in these hours at his studio ; but one may imagine that the realization of failing power must have caused him mental anguish far more terrible than all his physical suffering. In the last days of the summer of 1931 Orpen breathed his last, leaving behind him a magnificent record of work, rarely rivalled both as regards extent and consistent quality ; for of him it may truly be said : he never painted a bad picture.

APPENDICES

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF PAINTINGS

* Indicates that the Picture is illustrated in this book.

1895
Portrait of the Artist's Sister
(first portrait in oils).

1897
Portrait of the Artist's Sister.

1899
*“Hamlet.”

1900
“Amen Curaçao” (portrait of
John Maddocks).

Herbert Everett, ex N.E.A.C.,
1900.

Miss Ferrier.

J. Staats Forbes, ex N.E.A.C.,
1902.

*“A Mere Fracture,” ex
N.E.A.C., 1901.

*“Grace by Candlelight”
(portrait of Lady Orpen).

Mrs. Charles Hughes.

*“The Mirror” (Emily Scobel)
ex N.E.A.C., 1900.

“Soldiers at Cany,” ex
N.E.A.C., 1900.

Swinton Family Group.

Augustus John, ex N.E.A.C.,
1900.

1901
“The Bed, Cany.”
“The Window Picture,” ex
N.E.A.C., R.H.A.
“Hotel du Commerce, Cany.”

Portrait of a Child.

“The House of the Mad
Woman of Cany.”

The Lady in Black, ex
N.E.A.C., 1901.

“Leaving the Town, Cany.”

“Route de Veulettes.”

“Courtyard, Cany.”

*“Mrs. Everett on the Island
of Patmos.”

“The Happy Hypocrite,” ex
N.E.A.C., 1901.

1902

The Chess Players, ex
N.E.A.C., 1902.

Still Life: China and Japan,
ex N.E.A.C., 1903.

Portrait of the Artist's Mother.
John Maddocks and his Grand-
son.

“The Valuers” ex N.E.A.C.,
1902.

“The Valuers” (oil sketch).

“The Rebel,” ex N.E.A.C.,
1902.

Self-Portrait, ex N.E.A.C.,
1902.

1903

The Earl of Dunraven: Family
Group.

“The Red Scarf or Shawl,”
study for “Fairy Ring”
or “The Irish Shore,” ex
N.E.A.C., 1903.

Appendices

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>C. Uniacke Townshend (No. 1).
 C. Uniacke Townshend (No. 2).
 Captain Swinton.
 The Earl of Scarborough.
 Wyndham Quin : Family
 Group, ex N.E.A.C., 1903.
 "The Fur Cap," ex N.E.A.C.,
 1903.
 George Moore, ex N.E.A.C.,
 1903.
 • Augusta Everett, ex N.E.A.C.,
 1903.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1904</p> <p>Frederick Allen (riding master).
 Lord Barrymore.
 Mr. Danby, solicitor to C. J.
 Wertheimer.
 Lady Gerard.
 Lord Iveagh.
 Mrs. C. J. Wertheimer.
 Mrs. C. J. Wertheimer, ex
 N.E.A.C.
 C. J. Wertheimer.
 "The Cyder Press," ex
 N.E.A.C., 1904.
 "Bath Hour," ex N.E.A.C.,
 1904.
 Ruth Lane (Mrs. Shine), ex
 N.E.A.C., 1904.
 Portrait Study, ex N.E.A.C.,
 1904.
 "An Improvisation on the
 Organ," ex N.E.A.C.,
 1904.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1905</p> <p>A Man Praying.
 An Old Man.
 A Spanish Woman, ex
 N.E.A.C., 1905.</p> | <p>"The Fly Catcher" (study of a
 workman).
 Sir George Brooke, Bart.
 Lady Brooke.
 * "The Washhouse" (Lottie).
 Mrs. A. Q. Henriques.
 G. C. Beresford.
 "Lottie of Paradise Walk,"
 ex N.E.A.C., 1905.
 "Lottie feeding a Baby."
 Sir Anthony MacDonnell.
 "The Rest" (Lottie).
 The Hon. Mrs. Percy Wynd-
 ham : Interior Portrait
 (No. 1).
 The Hon. Mrs. Percy Wynd-
 ham : Interior Portrait
 (No. 2).
 Mrs. Yorke.
 "The Saint of Poverty" (No.
 1), ex N.E.A.C., 1905.
 "The Saint of Poverty"
 (No. 2).
 "Waiting their Cue," ex
 N.E.A.C., 1905., R.H.A.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1906</p> <p>"The Piano."
 "The Tired Girl."
 Michael Davitt, M.P.
 The Rt. Hon. T. W. Russell,
 M.P.
 William O'Brien, M.P.
 Sir Anthony MacDonnell,
 G.C.S.I.
 W. W. Goodbody.
 Miss Lumb, of Huddersfield.
 Howard St. George.
 Mrs. St. George.
 Major R. C. H. Sloane Stanley.
 Dr. Woods, ex R.H.A.
 "The Eastern Gown," ex
 N.E.A.C., 1906.</p> |
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Appendices

"The Reflection," ex N.E.A.C.,
1906.

*A Woman Nude, ex N.E.A.C.,
1906.

1907

"The Spanish Dancer," ex
Leeds.

Bothany Bay, Margate.

The Bar in the Hall by the Sea,
Margate.

The Rt. Hon. Augustine Birrell.

Nathaniel Hone, R.H.A.

The Rev. Sir J. P. Mahaffy,
D.D.

Sir Vere Foster, Bart., and
Family.

Mrs. W. Goodbody.

Miss Harmsworth: Interior
Portrait.

Self-Portrait (with white hand-
kerchief round head).

Self-Portrait (full length of
above).

Major-General Lawson, C.B.
Professor Mayor, ex. N.E.A.C.,

1908.

Mackenzie.

Lady Orpen, ex N.E.A.C.,
1907.

*"A Bloomsbury Family" (the
Nicholson Family), ex
N.E.A.C., 1908.

"Night," or "The Window,
Night."

"Night" (No. 2).

"Night" (small).

"The Old Cabman."

Sir James Stirling, ex P.P.

"The Spanish Dancer," ex
R.H.A.

C. Uniacke Townshend (copy
of 1907 portrait),

The Hon. Percy Wyndham:
Interior Portrait, ex
N.E.A.C., 1907.

*"Young Ireland" (Grace
Gifford), ex N.E.A.C.,
1907.

Grace Orpen, ex N.E.A.C.,
1907.

1908

Lena Ashwell (unfinished).

Sir Arthur Birch: Interior
Portrait.

Still Life: A white Chinese
figure against a black back-
ground.

"Connemara."

"The Coleen" (Miss Elvery).

"The Woman in Grey."

Captain Shawe-Taylor.

J. H. FitzHenry: Interior
Portrait.

W. Haslam.

The Rt. Hon. Timothy Healy,
M.P.

"The Idle Girl."

E. Imprey.

Interior of Clonsilla, with Mrs.
St. George.

Sir Guy Laking in St. James's
Palace: Interior Por-
trait.

Robert Littlejohn: Interior
Portrait.

Norman.

Mrs. A. de Pass.

Gardenia St. George.

Evan Spicer, L.C.C.

Captain Shaw Taylor.

C. W. Wallace.

*C. J. Wertheimer: Interior
Portrait, ex R.A., 1908.

Appendices

1909

The Rt. Hon. H. H. Asquith,
ex R.A.
"A Young Man from the
West" (Self-Portrait).
"A Breezy Day, Howth
Head."
"The Arran Islander," or
"The Man from Arran"
(Self-Portrait).
"Bridget" (Miss Elvery).
The late Archbishop of Cape-
town.
Coloured Man: Study of a
Head.
"The Dead Ptarmigan" (Self-
Portrait), ex N.E.A.C.,
1909.
Lindsay Fairfax.
Glyn Portrait Group.
Henry Guinness.
Percy H. Harris.
H. B. Hebeden, Principal of
Brasenose College, Oxford.
Interior of Clonsilla.
"In Dublin Bay" (figure of a
woman in white and
pink dress).
*"In the Dublin Mountains,"
ex N.E.A.C., 1909.
"Mary."
"The Wreck," or "The
Wave," ex N.E.A.C.,
1909
"On the Cliff," ex N.E.A.C.,
1909.
"Gipsies and the Bear" (oil
sketch).
Gardenia St. George.
"The Shower."
Hugh Spottiswoode and Son.
Lewis R. Tomalin: Interior
Portrait.

"The Wild Beast."
*"Homage à Manet":
Portrait Group, ex
N.E.A.C., 1909.

1910

The Birkbeck Family: Interior
Group.
Sir Eric Barrington, ex R.A.,
1910.
"Behind the Scenes."
The Late George F. Baker
(No. 1).
The Late George F. Baker,
No. 2).
The Late George F. Baker
(No. 3).
"Myself and Venus."
"The Knacker's Yard."
"Evening."
"Evening" (small).
Miss Harmsworth.
"The Jockey" (Self-Portrait).
"The Hungarians."
Sir Maurice Fitzgerald, Knight
of Kerry, Bt., C.V.O ex
R.A., 1910.
"Leading the Life in the West"
(Self-Portrait).
"On the Beach, Morning."
"Summer."
"Nude" (life-size version of
picture painted in 1906),
ex N.E.A.C., 1910.
"Open Air Life Class."
*"Myself and Cupid," ex
N.E.A.C., 1911.
*"The Sketcher" (Alfred
Rich), ex N.E.A.C., 1910.
"The Rest" (Edith, George
and Bear), ex N.E.A.C.,
1910.
F. H. Rawlins.

Appendices

Portrait of the Artist (mirror in background).
 "Trees at Howth," ex R.H.A.
 Gardenia St. George on a Donkey.
 "Trees Avenue at the Cliffs, Howth."
 *"On the Irish Shore," or "Fairy Ring," ex N.E.A.C., 1910.
 "Midday on the Beach," ex N.E.A.C., 1910.
 "Afternoon on the Cliff," ex N.E.A.C., 1910.

1911

Claude E. S. Bishop, ex R.A., 1911.
 The Countess of Crawford and Balcarres: Interior Portrait.
 Mrs. Berridge and Children: Portrait Group.
 The Rev. T. T. Gray, ex R.A., 1912.
 The Rt. Rev. Alfred G. Elliott, Bishop of Kilmore.
 The Earl of Leicester.
 Mrs. Loudan.
 The Bishop of Limerick and Ardfort.
 The Lord Mayor of Norwich.
 Stuart Ogilvie, ex R.A.
 Raymond Orpen.
 The Master of Trinity (No. 1).
 The Master of Trinity (No. 2).
 *The Artist's Father and Mother.
 "A Man in Black," ex R.A., 1911.

1912

Dr. Anderson.

Sir John Anderson, and small replica.
 Sir Harry Brittain, ex R.A., 1912.
 "By the Sea Shore, Howth."
 "The Blue Hat" (Mrs. Hone).
 "Morning Breeze," ex N.E.A.C., 1912.
 "Looking towards the Sea, Howth."
 "Mrs. Hone" (No. 4).
 *"The Café Royal," ex N.E.A.C., 1912.
 *"Mary."

Mrs. Dent.

The Earl of Derby.

Mme. Errazuriz.

Mme. Errazuriz's Son.

"In the Tent," ex N.E.A.C., 1912.

"Afternoon Sleep."

"On the Rocks."

"The Bailey Light."

"Kit."

Sir Alfred Lawrence.

Mr. Macrae.

Arthur Schuster.

Leonard Stokes.

W. Vivian, ex R.A., 1912.

"The Chinese Shawl" (Mrs. Hone), ex N.E.A.C., 1912.

"A Lady and Gentleman," ex R.A., 1912.

1913

Mrs. Bourne.

The Marchioness of Cholmondeley.

The Countess of Derby.

Richard B. Fudger, ex R.A., 1914.

Noel Gogarty.

Sir William Goulding.

Sir William Goulding.

Appendices

Interior, 25 Park Lane, with Sir Philip and Sybil Sassoon.
 "The Polish Carpet."
 Portrait of a Lady.
 Portrait of an Old Lady.
 "The Roscommon Dragoon or Volunteer" (Mrs. Hone).
 "Portrait Study of Myself," ex N.E.A.C., 1913.
 Mr. Vincent.
 Mr. Yuill.
 *"Sowing the Seed" (marble medium), ex N.E.A.C., 1913.

1914

Otto Beit.
 Lord Boston.
 Mrs. Money Coutts.
 *Miss Lily Carstairs (Mrs. Saportas), ex R.A., 1915.
 Captain Carroll Carstairs.
 Mrs. Charles Carstairs.
 Charles S. Carstairs.
 Mrs. Val Fleming.
 The Marquis of Headfort, ex R.A., 1915.
 "The Irish Volunteer" (Mrs. Hone).
 W. M. Murphy.
 "Painting," ex N.E.A.C., 1914.
 *"A Western Wedding," ex N.E.A.C., 1914.
 "Summer Afternoon," ex N.E.A.C., 1914.
 Mrs. St. George.
 Thomas Stanford.
 Sir Edgar Speyer.
 "Still Life."
 Sir John Thorold.
 Miss Muriel Wilson.
 His Grace the Archbishop of Liverpool, ex R.A., 1914.

1915

The Rt. Hon. Lord Barrymore, ex R.A., 1916.
 Madame W. Errazuriz.
 The Marchioness of Headfort, ex R.A., 1915.
 Lady Evelyn Herbert.
 Sir Charles Langman.
 *Mrs. Levisohn (Edna May).
 Geoffrey Lawrence.
 Lieutenant Letler.
 James Law, Editor of the *Scotsman*, ex R.A., 1916.
 Dr. Lloyd Roberts, ex R.A., 1916.
 Avenal St. George (from a photograph).
 Interior Sketch of Windsor Castle (No. 1).
 Interior Sketch of Windsor Castle (No. 2).
 Miss Oswald Smith.
 Lady Edena Wallace (Countess of Erroll).
 Michael Wemyss, ex R.A., 1919.
 Miss Whitridge.

1916

The Lord Ardilaun.
 Sir John Benn, Bt., ex R.A., 1917.
 Mrs. Claude Beddington (not finished).
 Lady Violet Bonham-Carter, ex R.A., 1917.
 *The Rt. Hon. Viscount Bryce, ex R.A., 1917.
 The Marchioness of Crewe, ex P.P.
 Sir Arthur du Cros,

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Lieutenant-General Sir John
Cowans, Q.M.G., ex R.A.,
1917.

The Rt. Hon. Winston Church-
ill, ex R.A., 1917.

Dr. E. J. Dillon, ex R.A., 1916.
Errazuriz (from photograph).

Colonel Elkington, D.S.O., ex
R.A., 1917.

*"The Holy Well" (marble
medium), ex N.E.A.C.,
1916.

The Earl of Lisburne.

Colonel George Morris (from
photograph).

Mrs. Pass.

Gardenia St. George, ex R.A.,
1916.

Miss Stiles.

*The Rt. Hon. The Earl
Spencer, K.G., ex R.A.,
1916.

The Hon. Mrs. John Ward.

Dr. Hayberg Wright.

1917

The Marchioness of Chol-
mondeley (portrait sketch
in black turban).

The Lady Gwendoline Church-
ill.

1918

Captain Hoidge.

Sir Eric Hambro.

1919

Sir Clifford Allbutt, K.C.B.,
M.D., F.R.S., ex R.A.,
1920.

Lord Cranbourne.

Sir Robert Kindersley.

Pierce Lacey.

Pierpoint Morgan.

The Rt. Hon. Lord Riddell, of
Walton Heath, R.A., 1920.

Vivien Hugh Smith, ex R.A.,
1920.

Miss Hoyte Wiborg (sketch).

1920

Sir Thomas Jaffrey, Bart.

General Sir William Birdwood.

Mr. Candy.

Mrs. Ruby Melville, ex R.A.

H. P. Davison (No. 1).

H. P. Davison (No. 2).

H. P. Davison (small portrait).

Mrs. Drum.

Master John Drum.

Mr. Frick.

The late Mr. Harjes.

Edward Jack.

Mr. Leslie, ex R.A., 1920.

Keith Merrill.

*Sir William MacCormick, ex
R.A., 1921.

Sir William MacCormick
(copy).

Rufus L. Patterson.

Anna Pavlova (unfinished).

Mrs. Slater.

Trevor Williams.

Sir Charles Villiers Stanford,
D.C.L., ex R.A., 1922.

1921

Sir Alan Anderson.

Mr. Bower.

Sidney Boulton, Chairman of
Lloyds, ex R.A., 1921.

Miss Aldrich Blake, ex R.A.,
1923.

The Rt. Hon. Lord Bearsted of
Maidstone, ex R.A., 1922.

E. A. Colquhoun, ex R.A.,
1922.

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General the Earl of Cavan.

Mr. Robert Clarke.

*Mrs. Robert Clarke.

Mrs. Stephen Clarke, ex R.A.,
1923.

Miss Clarke.

*"The Chef," ex R.A., 1921.

Paul D. Cravath.

Paul D. Cravath (copy).

Mr. Marshall Field.

• Field-Marshal Earl Haig, ex
R.A., 1921.

Earl Haig receiving the Thistle
from the King.

Lady Hulton.

Mr. Heath.

Otto H. Kahn.

Miss Kahn (now Mrs. Mar-
riott).

Mr. Lubbock.

Mrs. Le Breton.

*Lord Leverhulme (in robes).

Mrs. Goadby Loew.

"The Landru Trial."

Mrs. Melvill, ex R.A., 1921.

Sir Edward Pearson.

The Hon. Sir Charles Parsons,
K.C.B., ex R.A., 1922.

Sir John Ramsay.

Sir Hugh Reid, Bart.

Master St. George.

"The Poet," ex N.E.A.C.,
1921.

Miss Jenny Simson, ex R.A.,
1921.

E. J. Spencer, ex R.A., 1922.

Sir John Vassar Smith, Bart.

George Widener.

Mrs. George Widener.

1922

The late Lord Bearsted (copy
of portrait painted in 1921).

The late Lord Bearsted (copy
of portrait painted in 1921).

J. W. Byrne.

The Earl of Berkeley, ex R.A.,
1923.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Clarke.

Mr. Stephen Clarke.

Mrs. Stephen Clarke.

"Paris" (self-portrait reflected
in many mirrors), ex P.P.

*"The Disappointing Letter,"
ex N.E.A.C., 1922.

*"Early Morning," ex
N.E.A.C., 1922.

Lord Farringdon.

Mrs. Arthur Gibbs (Miss Bar-
bara Trevor Williams), ex
R.A., 1922.

Lord Glenavy, ex R.A., 1923.

Sir Edward Hulton.

*Rowland Knodler, ex R.A.,
1923.

Mr. Livisey.

Miss May Lardenberg.

Edward Mallinshrodt.

"The Nun," or "Sister X."

Baroness Robert Rothschild.

Miss Sandford.

John L. Severance.

"Amiens, 1914," ex N.E.A.C.,
1922.

1923

Sir William Ackroyd.

Viscount Cowdray.

Sir Herbert Cook.

Sir Herbert Cook (copy).

The Rt. Hon. Viscount
Churchill, ex R.A., 1923.
President Church.

"Sergeant Murphy and
Things," ex R.A., 1924.

The Lord Provost of Dundee.

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| <p>Senator Robert Elliot (oil sketch).
 Mr. Frazer.
 Sir Thomas Paxton, Lord Provost of Glasgow.
 *The Viscount Milner, K.G., G.C.B., K.C.B., G.C.M.G., ex R.A., 1924.
 Miss Elizabeth Miller.
 Sir Ian Malcolm, ex R.A., 1925.
 Count John McCormack, ex R.A., 1924.
 Dr. Lloyd Roberts (copy of 1915 portrait).
 The Bishop of Ripon (Dr. Strong).
 Paul Waterhouse, P.R.I.B.A., ex R.A.
 "Paris" (self reflected in mirrors).
 Mr. Scott.
 Mr. Surcock, ex P.P., 1930.
 The Viscount Wimborne, ex R.A., 1924.
 Lord Younger of Leckie.</p> | <p>H.M. the King and H.M. the Queen (for the Queen's Dolls' House).
 Colonel Leatham.
 D. J. Lyon.
 *Andrew Mellon.
 R. T. Mellon.
 Master Mellon (portrait sketch).
 Mr. Masters.
 Mr. Masters (copy).
 Mr. Pardo.
 W. A. Vernon.
 The Duke of Westminster, ex R.A., 1924.
 The Duchess of Westminster (now Mrs. Fred Cripps) (unfinished).
 *His Grace the Archbishop of York (Dr. Lang), ex R.A., 1924.
 "An old French Bedroom," ex N.E.A.C., 1924.</p> |
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| <p style="text-align: center;">1924</p> <p>The Alley, ex French Gallery.
 Viscount Cowdray.
 Gladys Cooper, ex R.A., 1926.
 Dr. Cutler (from a photograph).
 The Lord Dewar of Homestall, ex R.A., 1925.
 The Countess of Dudley (Girtie Millar).
 Sir Walter Durnford.
 Arthur V. Davis.
 General Coleman du Pont.
 Lord Farrington (copy of 1922 portrait).
 Mr. Guggenheim.
 Walter Judd, ex R.A., 1926.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">1925</p> <p>Sir William Meff, ex-Lord Provost of Aberdeen.
 The Marquess of Bath, ex R.A., 1925.
 Mr. Bacon.
 Mrs. Bacon.
 *"Man versus Beast," ex R.A., 1925.
 "Man versus Beast" (copy).
 N. Murray Butler, President Columbia University.
 Alderman H. A. Cole.
 Otis H. Cutler (from a photograph).
 The Earl of Derby.
 The Earl of Derby in Garter Robes, ex R.A., 1926.
 Dr. Murray Danforth.
 Mr. Forge.</p> |
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Lord Merrivale, ex R.A., 1926.
 Lord Grey of Fallodon.
 The late Myron T. Herrick,
 American Ambassador to
 France.
 Thomas Howarth.
 Herbert Haseltine.
 *The Rt. Hon. Sir Thomas
 Molony, Lord Chief Jus-
 tice of Ireland, ex R.A.
 Sidney Dark (oil sketch).
 Stephen O. Metcalf.
 Mrs. Ronald Macdonald (Miss
 Paton Brown).
 Mr. Rees (from a photograph).
 Mr. Ross.
 *"Man with a Paintbrush"
 (Self-Portrait).
 Mr. Summers.
 James Simpson.
 Leslie Wright.
 Captain Whitworth.

1926

General W. W. Atterbury.
 Miss Alderich Blake (copy of
 portrait painted in 1921).
 Miss Alderich Blake (copy of
 portrait painted in 1921).
 Sir William Waters Butler.
 "The Surgeon" (Mr. Ivor
 Back), ex R.A., 1926.
 The Hon. Evelyn Baring.
 Sir Louis Baron.
 H.R.H. Prince Arthur of Con-
 naught (not finished).
 Mrs. Danforth.
 Mr. Fleming.
 Miss Higgins.
 *"Closing or Resting Time,
 Avignon," ex R.A., 1926.
 The Rt. Hon. McKenzie King,
 Premier of Canada.

*Dame Madge Kendal, ex R.A.
 1928.
 The Countess of Lisburne, ex
 R.A., 1927.
 Miss Penelope Lawrence, M.D.,
 ex R.A., 1927.
 Miss Major.
 Captain Marshall Roberts,
 M.F.H.
 *"Après le Bain" (Self-Port-
 trait).
 Harry Sachs.
 A. L. Spitzer.
 Henry Sanderson.
 W. Tyser.
 Dr. Hugh Hampden Young.

1927

*"After the Ball," ex R.A.,
 1927.
 Bernard Baron, ex R.A., 1928.
 Bernard Baron (copy).
 *Master Danforth (oil sketch).
 Miss Susan Danforth (oil
 sketch).
 Master Danny Danforth (oil
 sketch).
 *Jacob Epstein.
 Professor J. A. Fleming, ex
 R.A., 1927.
 H. W. de Forest.
 Thomas Glass.
 Ernest R. Graham.
 Mrs. T. Howarth.
 Cecil Harmsworth.
 Harry G. Haskell.
 Ray A. Katz.
 Lord Lawrence of Kingsgate.
 Ivy Lee (portrait sketch).
 The Rt. Hon. D. Lloyd George,
 O.M., M.P., ex R.A.,
 1928.

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The Rt. Hon. D. Lloyd George,
O.M., M.P., (copy of
above).

Lord Middleton.

Sir George Maxwell, ex R.A.,
1928.

Colonel Philippi, ex R.A., 1927.
Samuel Sachs.

Gordon Selfridge, ex R.A.,
1928.

F. L. Steel.

Myron C. Taylor.

J. Owen Unwin, ex R.A., 1927.

J. Owen Unwin (copy).

Miss Trevor Williams.

Major Sam Welldon.

1928

Sir Ernest Benn.

A. James Burden.

*"The Black Cap," ex R.A.,
1928.

Colin Brodie.

T. Chadbourne, ex P.P.

Robert M. Carrier.

Captain Loewenstein (un-
finished).

Dr. Drury.

Sir Frederick Eckstein.

Sir Miles Mattinson.

Herbert Jones.

Mrs. George E. Kent.

Sir Harry McGowan, ex R.A.,
1931.

F. Pike.

Sir John Rutherford.

The Very Rev. Sir George
Adam Smith.

Miss Katie Trevor Williams.

H.R.H. the Prince of Wales.

Sir Robert Williams, ex R.A.,
1929.

Sir David Milne Watson.

1929

Lord John Cholmondeley (oil
sketch), ex R.A., 1929.

The Rt. Hon. Neville Chamber-
lain, ex R.A., 1929.

Cedric Chivers, late Lord
Mayor of Bath (from a
photograph).

Dr. Coffey.

Dr. J. B. de Lee, M.D., ex P.P.

Sir Frederick Eckstein (copy of
portrait painted in 1928).

Robert T. Francis.

Mr. Grace.

St. John Harmsworth, ex R.A.,
1930.

Julian H. Harris.

Miss Harris (oil sketch).

Miss Galey (oil sketch).

Miss Holforth.

Sydney Lansburgh.

*Sir Ray Lankester, K.C.B.,
ex R.A., 1929.

The Earl of Meath, ex R.A.,
1929.

Cyrus H. McCormick.

Michael Mason.

Robert D. Patterson.

Mrs. Ward C. Pitfield.

Sir Harry Renwick, ex R.A.,
1930.

Harold C. Richard.

Walter Tapper, P.R.I.B.A., ex
R.A., 1929.

W. A. Tennant, ex R.A., 1930.

1930

Major the Hon. J. J. Astor.

"A Gentleman from Cairo"
(begun in 1923), ex P.P.,
1930.

Sir Ralph Armstruther.

Appendices

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| <p>Miss Camilla Alexander, ex R.A., 1931.</p> <p>"A Woman Thinking" (Miss Sinclair).</p> <p>The Rt. Hon. the Lord Ashfield.</p> <p>Mother and Child, ex R.A., 1930.</p> <p>Sir Andrew Lewis, ex-Lord Provost of Aberdeen.</p> <p>The late Bernard Baron (copy of portrait painted in 1927).</p> <p>Edward Baron, ex R.A., 1931.</p> <p>Annie Viscountess Cowdray.</p> <p>Sir Archibald Campbell.</p> <p>The Rt. Hon. Sir Evelyn Cecil.</p> <p>Dr. J. B. de Lee, M.D. (copy of portrait painted in 1929).</p> <p>Sir Guy Dawber, A.R.A., P.R.I.B.A., ex R.A., 1930.</p> <p>Sir Gregory Foster.</p> <p>"Eve in the Garden of Eden" (marble medium), ex R.A., 1931.</p> <p>A Woman Reading (marble medium).</p> <p>Robert McQueen Grant, Jnr.</p> <p>Captain Grosvenor (from a photograph).</p> <p>Sir Alexander Kleinwort.</p> <p>"A Sporting Gentleman and Mr. Funny" (The Hon. George Lambton), begun in 1925, ex P.P.</p> <p>Dr. John Mott.</p> <p>Professor Manly.</p> <p>Colonel Mitchell, M.F.H.</p> <p>Alex Montgomery, Jnr.</p> <p>James Franklin Matchette.</p> <p>*"Palm Sunday, A.D. 33" (marble medium), ex R.A., 1931.</p> | <p>"Palm Sunday" (study, painted on a photograph).</p> <p>"Palm Sunday" (small).
John Phipps.
Mr. Recketts.
Sir Alexander Wright.
Sir Alexander Wright (copy).
Lady Wylie.
Miss H. M. White, ex R.A., 1930.
Lord Younger of Leckie (copy of 1923 portrait).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1931</p> <p>Mr. Cook, late member of Arts Club (from a photograph).</p> <p>Duncan Tate, late member of Arts Club (from a photograph).</p> <p>Portrait of Lieutenant-Colonel John Buchan's Brother (from a photograph).</p> <p>George Washington Crawford.</p> <p>Mrs. Cronin (from a photograph).</p> <p>Dr. J. B. de Lee, M.D. (second copy of portrait painted in 1929).</p> <p>Sir Henry McMahon.</p> <p>Anna Pavlova (from a photograph, marble medium), ex R.A., 1931.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Uncertain Date</i></p> <p>Miss Aikman.</p> <p>Bathing Cove, Dublin Bay.</p> <p>Lady Rocksavage (in rose-coloured velvet with a white frill).</p> <p>"Corn shall grow in the Desert."</p> <p>Dublin Bay from Howth.</p> |
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- Nude on the seashore (early).
 "A Young Man Looking out on the World" (early self-portrait).
 "A Chinese Shawl" (Mrs. Hone).
 Michael Davitt.
 Miss Mona Dunn.
 Ireland Lily (early).
 Mme. Errazuriz (full length in red dress), called Mme. X., ex P.P.
 Grace Gifford (oil sketch).
 Two early self-portraits (now at Melbourne).
 Lady Orpen, early sketch (now at Melbourne).
 Anna Pavlova (unfinished).
 Senator Oliver St. J. Gogarty.
 The Beggar Girl.
 The old Coster.
 "Job" (No. 1).
 "Job" (No. 2).
 "In the Artist's Studio."
 "Lord George Hell."
 "The Storm, Dublin Bay."
 "Nell Gwyn Public House."
 "Old John's Cottage, Connemara."
 "The Old Circus," or "Eros" (very early).
 Lady Orpen (now at Buenos Aires).
 Self-Portrait, with the Boy with the Dolphin.
 The Grey Lady.
 Miss Morrissey, Barmaid.
 Two Female Figures standing near Wall. Eventide.
 * "The Model" (Johnnie Grainger, painting a semi-nude in sunlight).
 "Pip, Squeak and Wilfrid" (tiny oil portraits).
- "The Man from the West" (portrait of John Keating).
 "The Bear."
 A. H. S. Orpen in riding kit.
 The Rt. Hon. Lord Revelstoke (unfinished).
 Self-Portrait (early).
 Self-Portrait (early).
 "A young Man looking out on the World" (early).
 Self-Portrait (small full length with palette, early).
 Self-Portrait (full length with Panama hat, early).
 "Sunlight," ex R.I.
 "The Smuggler's Cave, Kingsgate" (large).
 "The Angler" (Mrs. Hone).
 "The Empty Bed," ex R.A., 1932.
 "The English Nude."
 "Star of the Sea: 'Pray for thy children, pray for me.'"
 View of Montmartre.
- The Great War & the Peace Conference*
 1917-1919
 Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, K.T., G.C.B., G.C.V.O., K.C.I.E.
 Major-General H. M. Trenchard, C.B., D.S.O., R.F.C.
 A Tank.
 Le Sars, F. E. crashed.
 The Gunner's Shelter, Thiepval.
 Inside a Mine Crater, La Boisselle.
 Tommies passing the Ypres Salient.
 Men resting, Bapaume Road.
 *Blown up—Mad.

Appendices

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| <p>Thiepval.
 A Grave and a Mine Crater at
 La Boisselle, August 1917.
 The Great Mine, La Boisselle.
 Ready to Start.
 Outside a small Mine Crater,
 Bapaume Road.
 The Artist.
 "Good-bye-ee" : Cassel.
 A Trench, Thiepval.
 A Dead German in a Trench.
 A Trench, Thiepval.
 H.M. Land Ship "Shell Out."
 A blown-up German Trench,
 Beaumont Hamel.
 The End of a Hero and a Tank
 at Courcellette.
 German Prisoners captured at
 Messines.
 A Tank, Pozières.
 The Château, Thiepval.
 A Trench, Beaumont Hamel.
 Graves, Thiepval.
 Frozen Feet, Fleurs.
 The Black Watch.
 The N.C.O. Pilot, R.F.C.
 *General Sir Herbert C. O.
 Plumer, G.C.M.G.,
 G.C.V.O., K.C.B.
 Lieutenant-Colonel A. N. Lee,
 D.S.O., O.B.E., T.D.
 Lieutenant-General Sir Travers
 Clarke, K.C.M.G., C.B.
 The Receiving Room.
 A Man with a Cigarette.
 The Falling Bomb.
 *Dead Germans in a Trench.
 The Deserter.
 A Howitzer in Action.
 Bringing in a wounded
 Tommy.
 *Poilu and Tommy.
 German 'Planes visiting Cassel.
 A Soldier Resting.</p> | <p>Mines and the Bapaume Road,
 La Boisselle.
 A Gunners' Shelter in a Trench,
 Thiepval.
 The Refugee (a).
 A German Gunners' Shelter,
 Warlencourt.
 A View from the Old British
 Trenches.
 My Work Room, Cassel.
 The Household Brigade pass-
 ing to the Ypres Salient,
 Cassel.
 The Main Street, Combles.
 The Somme : A Clear Day.
 Some Members of the Allied
 Press Camp, with their
 Press officers.
 Dieppe.
 The Butte de Warlencourt.
 German Sick, captured at Mes-
 sines.
 Soldiers and Peasants, Cassel.
 A Grave in a Trench.
 A Village : Evening.
 The Main Street, Thiepval.
 Major J. B. McCudden, V.C.,
 D.S.O., M.C., M.M.
 The Girls' College, Péronne.
 Adam and Eve at Péronne.
 Brigadier-General the Rt. Hon.
 J. E. B. Seely, C.B.,
 D.S.O., M.P.
 A Support Trench.
 The Thinker on the Butte de
 Warlencourt.
 A Death among the Wounded
 in the Snow.
 The Warwickshires entering
 Péronne, March 1917.
 A Man Thinking.
 The Manchesters, Arras.
 Christmas Night, Cassel.
 A Man resting, near Arras.</p> |
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Appendices

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| <p> A Type of captured German.
 The Courtyard, Hôtel Sauvage,
 Cassel, Nord.
 Sir William Orpen, R.A.
 *Bombing; Night.
 A Highlander passing a Grave.
 An Airman.
 A House at Péronne.
 Thiepval Wood.
 Brigadier-General J. H. Elles,
 C.B., D.S.O.
 The Schwaben Redoubt.
 The Big Crater, No. 2.
 Monsieur R. D. de Maratray.
 The Mascot of the Coldstream
 Guards.
 Lieutenant A. P. F. Rhys
 Davids, D.S.O., M.C.
 The Refugee (<i>b</i>).
 German Wire, Thiepval.
 Major F. E. Hotblack, D.S.O.,
 M.C.
 Adam and Eve at Péronne.
 German Prisoners by the Road-
 side.
 Houses near Aubigny.
 Wounded in the Chest.
 The Bapaume Road.
 Royal Irish Fusiliers.
 The Road to Arras.
 A Camp, Tincques.
 Five German Prisoners.
 A Study of a Soldier.
 Two R.F.C. Officers just
 wounded.
 Preparing to Present Arms.
 K.O.S.B.
 An R.A.M.C. Stretcher-Bearer.
 Grevillers: The Return of the
 Peasants.
 Wounded at Montauban.
 Albert.
 A Captured Munition Dump.
 After a Fight. </p> | <p> South Irish Horse.
 General Birdwood returning to
 his Headquarters.
 The Entrance to a Dug-out,
 Beaumont Hamel.
 A Man in a Trench.
 The Return of a Patrol.
 A heavy Gun near Arras.
 Iron Cross: Prussian Guard.
 The Church, Péronne.
 Tanks.
 Mont St. Eloi.
 The Gas Mask.
 Péronne.
 A German Observation Tree.
 Montauban Wood, with
 Graves.
 Men in the Trenches, near
 Hendicourt.
 The Great Camouflage, Com-
 bles.
 German Sick, captured at
 Messines, in a Canadian
 Hospital.
 K.O.S.B. "Fagged."
 A Grenadier Guardsman.
 Marshal Foch, O.M.
 General Sir Henry Sey-
 mour Rawlinson, Bart.,
 G.C.V.O., K.C.B.,
 K.C.M.G.
 The first C.C., Q.M.A.A.C., in
 France.
 *In their Cellar at Amiens.
 Brigadier-General William
 Thomas Francis Horwood,
 D.S.O.
 **"To the Unknown British
 Soldier in France," ex
 R.A., 1923.
 The Mad Woman of Douai.
 Harvest, 1918.
 Prince Antoine d'Orléans et
 Braganza, M.C. </p> |
|---|---|

Appendices

- *A Peace Conference at the Quai d'Orsay, ex R.A., 1920.
- The Signing of Peace in the Hall of the Mirrors, Versailles, June 28th, 1919, ex R.A., 1920.
- All the above, which include pencil, charcoal and water-colour drawings, are at the Imperial War Museum.*
- *Lieutenant-General Sir Arthur Currie, G.C.M.G., K.C.B.
- Major-General L. J. Lipsett, C.B., C.M.G.
- Major-General Sir D. Watson, K.C.B., C.M.G.
- Major-General Sir H. E. Burstell, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., A.D.C.
- Major-General Sir F. O. W. Loomis, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.
- Major-General Sir A. C. MacDonnell, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.
- Major H. W. O'Connor, D.S.O.
- The above are in the Canadian War Memorials paintings, in Ottawa.*
- "Entry of the Kaiser into Berlin."
- Highlanders resting on the Somme.
- Delville Wood.
- A Man on the Butte.
- An Italian Major.
- Armistice Night, Amiens.
- *Changing Billets, Picardy.
- Zonnebeke.
- Hotel du Périgord, Amiens.
- Ruins of the Halle Centrale, Amiens.
- German Bomb Fire in Picardy.
- The Rest Camp, St. Valéry-sur-Somme.
- A Christmas Party in France.
- Adam and Eve at Péronne.
- Death among the Wounded in the Snow.
- Peasants taking Cover in France.
- Marshal Foch (copy of picture in Imperial War Museum).
- An Enemy 'Plane over St. Denis.
- The Rt. Hon. the Earl of Balfour.
- H.H. the Maharajah of Bikanir.
- The Rt. Hon. Viscount Cecil.
- Dr. Alfonso da Costa.
- The Rt. Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G.
- Major-General Carton de Wiart, V.C.
- M. R. Dmowski.
- The Emir Feisul.
- Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Maurice Hankey.
- The Rt. Hon. Lord Hardinge of Penshurst.
- Colonel Edward M. House.
- M. Paul Hymans.
- Mr. Robert Lansing.
- The Rt. Hon. W. F. Massey.
- The Rt. Hon. the Marquis of Reading.
- Major-General Sir Ch. Sackville-West.
- Prince Kimimouchi Saianzi.
- Dr. Augusto Soares.
- The Rt. Hon. Lord Sumner.
- Mr. E. Venizelos.
- The Rt. Hon. Sir J. Ward.
- Admiral of the Fleet Lord Wester Wemyss.
- Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson.
- President Woodrow Wilson.

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President Woodrow Wilson
(copy).
General John Pershing.
Major-General Sir F. Sykes.
The Rt. Hon. G. N. Barnes, C.H.
The Rt. Hon. Earl Beatty.
The Rt. Hon. D. Lloyd George,
O.M.
M. G. E. Clémenceau.
"The Polish Messenger."
The Rt. Hon. Sir Robert
Borden.
*Colonel T. E. Lawrence.
The Rt. Hon. W. H. Hughes.
The Rt. Hon. General Louis
Botha.
The Rt. Hon. General Louis
Botha (copy).
The Rt. Hon. General Jan C.
Smuts.
The Rt. Hon. General Jan C.
Smuts (copy).

Self-Portraits

"Myself and Venus" (No. 1)
(Carnegie Institute, Pitts-
burg).
"Myself and Venus" (No. 2)
(Dublin, Municipal Gal-
lery).
"The Painter," with white
handkerchief round head
and spectacles on nose.
"The Painter," full length of
above (Laing Art Gallery).
"The Dead Ptarmigan"
(Dublin, National Gallery).
"A Young Man from the
West."
"Leading the Life of the
West" (New York,
Metropolitan Museum).
"The Jockey" or "The Bal-

doyle Steeplechaser"
(Stockholm, National
Museum).
"The Man from Arran" or
"The Arran Islander"
(bought by Mrs. St.
George).
"Portrait Study of Myself"
(St. Louis, U.S.A.).
Early Sketch of Self (bought
by Senator Elliot).
Early Self-Portrait (bought by
Senator Elliot).
"Orpsie Boy" (water-colour,
Oldham Art Gallery).
"Older Again, Orpsie Boy"
(sketch, bought by Lady
Walston).
"A Young Man looking out
on the World" (bought
by C. Copland).
"Ready to Start" (Imperial
War Museum).
Self-Portrait (Imperial War
Museum).
Self-Portrait (Imperial War
Museum).
*"Man with a Paintbrush"
(Florence Uffizi Gallery).
"Paris" (Cambridge, Fitz-
william Museum).
*"Après le Bain, Dieppe."
*"Myself and Cupid" (No. 1).
"Myself and Cupid" (No. 2)
(owned by Lady Orpen).
Small full length with Palette
(early).
Full length with Panama Hat
in Hand (early).
Early Head of Self.
"The Old Circus" or "Eros"
(self-portrait with John
and Rothenstein in Picca-
dilly Circus. Very early).

Appendices

Pictures in Public Galleries
For War and Peace Conference
Pictures *see* Special List.

ABERDEEN

"By the Cradle" (pencil drawing).
Sir Andrew Lewis, ex-Lord Provost.
Sir Thomas Jaffery, Bart.
• Sir William Meff, ex-Lord Provost.
*The Rt. Hon. Viscount Bryce.

ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA

Marshal Foch.

BELFAST

"A Breeze" (Howth).
"The Tired Girl."

BRADFORD

The Rt. Hon. G. N. Barnes, C.H.

BUENOS AIRES

Lady Orpen.

CAMBRIDGE, FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM

"Paris."

CHICAGO

"The Old Cabman."
"The Woman in Grey."

DIPLOMA GALLERY, ROYAL ACADEMY

*"The Chef."

DUBLIN, MUNICIPAL GALLERY

"A Breezy Day," Howth Head.

Captain Shawe-Taylor.
"China and Japan," Reflections.

Michael Davitt, M.P.
Michael Davitt (drawing).
Miss Lane (Mrs. Shrine).
"Myself and Venus."
Nathaniel Hone, R.H.A.
Pencil Study.

Sir Anthony MacDonell, G.C.S.I.

The Artist's Wife (coloured crayons).

The Gipsy (tinted drawing).

The Portuguese Woman (drawing).

The Rev. Sir J. P. Mahaffy, D.D.

The Rt. Hon. Augustine Birrell.

The Rt. Hon. T. W. Russell, M.P.

The Rt. Hon. T. W. Russell (drawing).

William O'Brien, M.P.

DUBLIN, NATIONAL GALLERY

"Job" (drawing).

"The Dead Ptarmigan."

*"The Washhouse" (Lottie).

DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA

Delville Wood.

General Smuts.

EDINBURGH, SCOTTISH NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

The Rt. Hon. Earl Beatty.

FLORENCE

*"Man with a Paintbrush."

Appendices

JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

- "George, Edith and Bear"
 (drawing).
 "Job" (No. 1).
 *"On the Irish Shore" or
 "Fairy Ring."
 "The Hungarians."

LAING

- "The Painter."

LEEDS

- "The Red scarf or shawl."

LIVERPOOL

- Landscape.

MANCHESTER

- J. Staats Forbes.
 Mrs. Charles Hughes.
 *"Homage à Manet."

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

- G. C. Beresford.
 General Louis Botha.
 General Sir William Birdwood.
 "Night" (No. 2).

NEW YORK, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM

- "Leading the Life in the
 West."

OLDHAM

- "Behind the Scenes."
 "Orpsie Boy" (water-colour).

OTTAWA, CANADIAN NATIONAL GALLERY

- "Mary."
 Capt. Hoidge.

PARIS, LUXEMBOURG

- *"The Café Royal."

PITTSBURGH, CARNEGIE INSTI- TUTE

- "Myself and Venus."

ST. LOUIS

- Portrait Study of the Artist.

SCOTTISH MODERN ARTS ASSOCIATION

- *"A Bloomsbury Family."

STOCKHOLM

- "The Jockey."

SYDNEY, N.S.W., AUSTRALIA

- An Italian Major.

TATE GALLERY

- *Dame Madge Kendal.
 Lady Orpen.
 "Sampson and Delilah"
 (drawing).
 *Sir William MacCormick.
 "The Angler."
 "The Mirror."
 *"The Model" (A. W. Rich)
 (water-colour).

TORONTO, CANADA

- *"The Sketcher" (A. W. Rich).

VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM

- A Model's Head (pencil).
 "Little Miss Newnes."
 "The Draughtsman and
 Model" (drawing).
 "The Earl of Leicester."

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